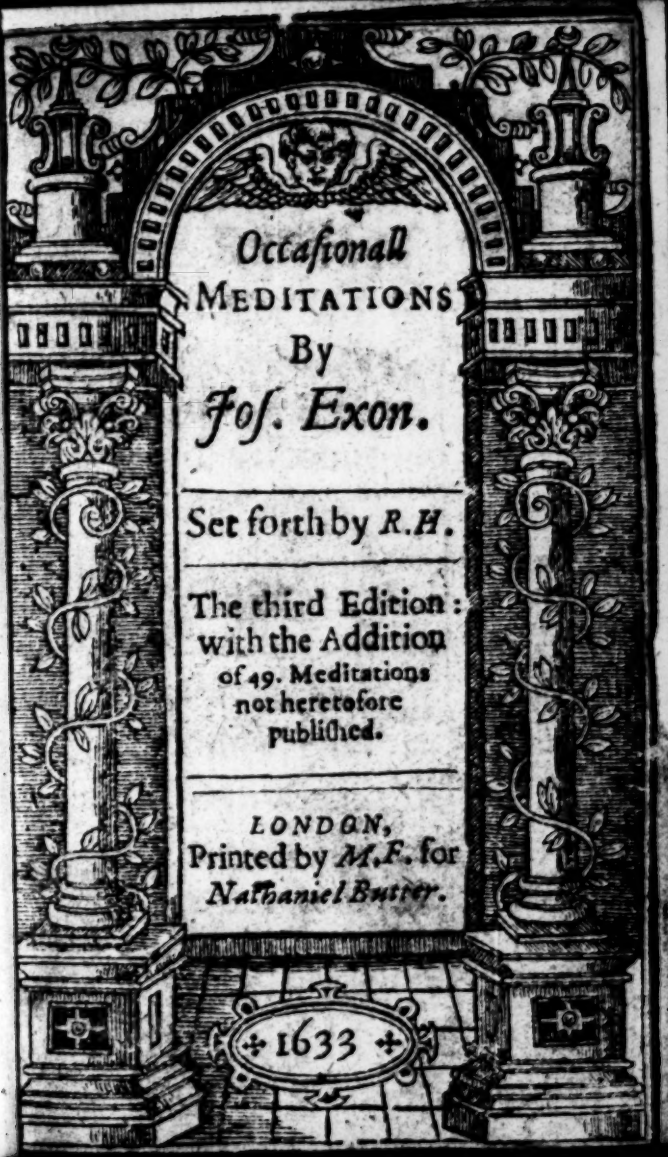


Occasionall MEDITATIONS By Jos. Exon.

Set forth by R.H.

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1633

TO
THE RIGHT
HONORABLE,
My very good Lord,
IAMES,
Lord viſcount
Doncaſter.

RIGHT HON:

FInding theſe Papers amõgſt others lying aſide in my Fathers ſtudy, whereof I conceiued good vſe might be made, in regard of that ſpirituall advan-

tage which they promiſed, I obtained of him good leave to ſend them abroad, whereto he profeſſed himſelfe the more eaſily induced, for that his continuall and weighty imployments in this large and buſie Dioceſſe will not yet afford him leiſure to diſpatch thoſe his other fixed Meditations on the Hiſtory of the new Teſtament; in the meane time, the expreſ-

expressions of these voluntary and sudden thoughts of his shall testifie how fruitfully hee is wont to improve those short ends of time, which are stolne from his more important avocations; (and unlesse my hopes faile mee) the patterne of them may prove not a little beneficiall to others. Holy mindes have beene ever wont to looke through these

bodily obiects, at ſpirituall, and heavenly; So SULPITIUS reports of S. MARTIN, that ſeeing a ſheepe newly ſhorne, hee could ſay; Lo here's one that hath performed that command in the Goſpell; having two Coats ſhee hath given away one; and ſeeing an Hog-heard freezing in a thin ſuit of skinnes; Loe (ſaid hee) There is *Adam* caſt out of Paradiſe; and

and ſeing a meadow, part rooted up, part whole; but eaten downe, and part flouriſhing, hee ſaid, The firſt was the ſtate of fornicatiõ, the ſecond of Marriage, the third of Virginity: But what do I ſeeke any other author, then the Lord of Life himſelf? Who upon the drawing of water from the Well of SHILO, on the day of the great *Hoſanna*; tooke occaſion to

speake of those Living waters, which should flow from every true beleever, *Joh.* 7.37; and upon occasion of a bodily feast, *Luke* 14. entred into that Divine discourse of Gods gratious invitation of us to those spirituall viands of grace and glory. Thus methinks, we should still bee climing up in our thoughts, from Earth to Heaven; and suffer no object to crosse

crosse us in our way without some spirituall use, & application; Thus it pleased my Revered Father sometimes to recreate himselfe, whose manner hath beene, when any of these Meditations have unsought offerd themselves unto him, presently to set them downe; a course which I wish had beene also taken in many more, which might no doubt have

beene very profitable
Theſe, as they are,
I ſend forth under
your Honourable
Name, out of thoſe
many reſpects, which
are, in an hereditary
right, due to your
Lordſhip, as beeing
apparēt heire to thoſe
two ſingular Patrons
of my juſtly Reveren-
ced Father, The emi-
nent vertue of which
your noble Parents in
a gratious Succeſſion
yeelds to your Lord-
ſhip

ſhip an happy example; which to follow is the onely way to true Honour; For the daily increaſe wherof here; and the everlaſting crowne of it hereafter, his prayers to God ſhall not bee wanting, who deſires to be accounted,

Your Lordſhips devoted

in all humble obſervance,

RO. HALL.

OCCASIONALL MEDITATIONS.

The Proeme.

I Have heedlesly lost (I confesse) many good thoughts, these few my Paper hath preserved from vanishing; The example whereof may perhaps be more usefull then the matter; Our active

active Soule can no more forbeare to thinke, then the eye can chooſe but ſee, when it is open; would we but keepe our wholeſome notions together, mankinde would bee too rich; To do well, no object ſhould paſſe us without uſe, Every thing that we ſee, reads us new lectures of Wiſdome and Piety; It is a ſhame for a Man to be ignorant, or Godles, under ſo many Tutors! For mee, I would not wiſh to live longer, then

I ſhall bee better for my eyes; and have thought it thankeworthy; thus to teach weake mindes, how to improve their thoughts upon all like occaſions. And if ever theſe lines ſhall come to the publique view, I deſire, and charge my Reader, whoſoever hee be, to make mee, and himſelfe ſo happy, as to take out my leſſon, and to learne how to read Gods great Booke, by mine.

OCCASIONALL MEDITATIONS.

I.

Upon the sight of the Heavens moving.

I Can see nothing stand still but the Earth; all other things are in motion: Even that Water which makes up one Globe with the Earth, is

is ever stirring in ebbes and flowings; the clouds over my head, the heavens above the clouds; these, as they are most conspicuous, so are they the greatest patternes of perpetuall action; what should wee rather imitate then this glorious frame? O God, when we pray that thy will may bee done in Earth, as it is in Heaven, though we meane chiefly the inhabitants of that place, yet wee doe not exclude the very place of those blessed inhabitants, frō being an example of our Obedience. The motion of this thy Heaven is perpetuall,

tuall, so let me ever be acting somewhat of thy will; the motion of thine Heaven is regular, never swarving from the due points; so let mee ever walke steddily in the wayes of thy will; without all diversions, or variations from the line of thy Law; In the motion of thine Heaven, though some Starres have their own peculiar, & contrary courses, yet all yeeld themselves to the sway of the maine circumvolution of that first mover; so, though I have a will of mine owne, yet let mee give my selfe over to bee ruled, and ordered by thy

Spirit

Spirit in all my wayes.

Man is a little world; my Soule is heaven, my Body is earth; if this earth bee dull and fixed, yet O God, let my heavē (like unto thine) move perpetually, regularly, & in a constant subjection to thine holy Ghost.

II.

Vpō the sight of a Dyall.

IF the Sunne did not shine upon this Diall, no body would looke at it; in a cloudy day it stands like an unseles post, unheeded, unregarded;

But

But when once those beames break forth, every passenger runnes to it, and gazes on it; O God, whiles thou hidest thy countenance from mee, me thinkes all thy Creatures passe by me, with a willing neglect; indeed, what am I, without thee? And if thou have drawn in me some lines, & notes of able indowments, yet, if I bee not actuated by thy grace, all is in respect of use, no better then nothing: But, when thou reneweſt the light of thy loving countenance upō me, I finde a sensible, and happy change of condition; me thinkes, all things looke

looke upon me with such cheere, and observance as if they meant to make good that Word of thine; Those that honour mee, I will honour; now every line and figure which it hath pleased thee to worke in mee serve for usefull and profitable direction; O Lord, all the glory is thine, give thou me light I shall give others information; both of us shall give thee praise.

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III.

Vpon the ſight of an Eclips of the Sunne.

LIght is an ordinary and familiar bleſſing; yet ſo deare to us, that one houres interception of it ſets all the world in a wonder. The two great Luminaries of heaven, as they impart light to us, ſo they withdraw light frō each other. The Sunne darkens the full Moone, in caſting the ſhadow of the earth upon her oppoſed face; The new Moon repayes this blemiſh to the Sunne, in the interpoſing of her darke body betwixt

betwixt our eyes, and hi
glorious beams; the earth
is troubled at both: O
God, if wee bee so afflic
ted with the obscuring
of some peece of one o
thy created lights, for a
houre, or two: what
confusion shall it be, tha
thou, who art the God o
these lights, (in compari
son of whom they are
meer darknes) shalt hide
thy face frō thy creature
for ever? Oh thou tha
art the Sonne of righte
ousnesse: if every of my
sinnes cloud thy face: ye
let not my grievous sin
eclipse thy light; Thou
shinest alwayes, though
do not see thee, but, Oh,
never

never suffer my sinnes so to dárken thy visage that I cannot see thee.

IIII.

Vpon the sight of a gliding Starre.

HOw easily is our sight deceived? How easily doth our sight deceive us? We saw no difference betwixt this Star and the rest; the light seemed alike, both whiles it stood, and whiles it fell; now, we know it was no other, then a base slimie meteor, guilded with the Sun-beames; and now

our foot can tread upon that, which ere while our eye admired; had it been a Star, it had ſtill, & ever ſhined; now, the very fall argues it a falſe and elementary apparitiõ; thus our Charity doth, and muſt miſ-lead us in our Spirituall judgements; if wee ſee men exalted in their Chriſtian profeſſiõ, fixed in the upper region of the Church, ſhining with appearances of Grace; we may not think them other then ſtarres, in this lower firmament; but, if they fal from their holy ſtation; and imbrace the preſent world; whether in judgement or practiſe,

practiſe, renouncing the Truth, & power of godlineſs; now we may boldly ſay, they had never any true light in them; and were no other then a glittering compoſition of Pride and hypocriſie; O God, if my charity make mee apt to bee deceived by others, let me be ſure not to deceive my ſelfe; perhaps, ſome of theſe apoſtating Starres have thought themſelves true: let their miſ-carriage make me heedfull; let the inward light of thy grace more convince my truth to my ſelfe, then my outward profeſſiõ can repreſẽt me *glorious* to others.

V.

Vpon a faire Proſpect.

WHat a pleaſing variety is here of Townes, Rivers, Hills, dales, woods, Medowes; each of them ſtriving to ſet forth other; and all of them to delight the eye? So as this is no other thē a naturall, & reall Landskip drawne by that Almighty, and skilfulhand, in this table of the Earth, for the pleaſure of our view; no other creature beſides Man is capable to apprehend this beautie; I

ſhall

ſhall doe wrong to him that brought me hither, if I do not feed my eyes, and praiſe my Maker; It is the intermixture, and change of theſe objects that yeelds this contentment both to the ſenſe, and minde; But, there is a ſight, O my Soule, that without all varietie, offers thee a truer and fuller delight; even this Heaven above thee: All thy other proſpects end in this; This glorious circumference bounds, and circles, and inlightens all that thine eye can ſee; whether thou looke upward, or forward, or about thee, there thine eie

alights, there let thy thoughts be fixed.

One inch of this light-ſome Firmament hath more beauty in it, then the whole face of the Earth; And yet, this is but the floore of that goodly fabricke, the outward curtain of that glorious Tabernacle; couldſt thou but (Oh that thou couldſt) look within that vayle, how ſhouldſt thou bee raviſhed with that bliſſefull ſight? There, in that incomprehenſible light, thou ſhouldſt ſee him whom none can ſee, and not bee bleſſed, thou ſhouldeſt ſee millions of pure and majeſticall Angels,

gels, of holy & glorified Soules: there, amongſt thy Fathers many manſions thou ſhouldſt take happie notice of thine owne: Oh the beſt of earth, now vile and contemptible, Come down no more, O my Soule, after thou haſt once pitched upon this heavenly *glory*; or if this fleſh force thy deſcent, be unquiet till thou art let looſe to immortality.

VI.

Vpon the frame of a globe caſually broken.

IT is hard to ſay whether is the greater, Mans art, or Impotence: He that cannot make one ſpire of graſſe, or corne of ſand, will yet bee framing of Worlds; he can imitate all things, who can make nothing; Here is a great world in a little roome, by the skill of the workeman, but in leſſe roome, by miſ-accident; Had hee ſeene this, who upon the view of *Platoes* Booke of Commonwealth eaten with Mice, pre-

prefaged the fatall miſ-carriage of the publike State; hee would ſure have conſtrued this caſualty as ominous: What ever become of the material world; (whoſe decay might ſeeme no leſſe to ſtand with divine Providence, then this Microcoſme of individual mã) ſure I am, the frame of the morall world is, and muſt be diſ-joynted in the laſt times: Men do & will fall from evill to worſe; he that hath made al times hath told us that the laſt ſhall be perilous; Happie is hee that can ſtand upright, when the world declines; and can

indeavour to repaire the common ruine with a conſtancy in goodneſſe.

VII.
Vpon a Cloud.

WHether it were a naturall Cloud, wherewith our aſcēding Saviour was intercepted from the eyes of his Diſciples, upon mount Olivet, I inquire not; this I am ſure of, that the time now was when a Cloud ſurpaſſed the Sunne in glory; How did the intentive eyes of thoſe raviſhed beholders envie that

that happy meteor; and since they could no more see that glorious Body, fixed themselves upon that celestiall Chariot, wherewith it was carried up. The Angels could tell the gazing Disciples (to fetch them off from that astonishing prospect) that this JESVS should so come againe, as they had seen him depart; He went up in a Cloud, and he shal come againe in the clouds of heaven, to his last judgement; O Saviour, I cannot looke upward, but I must see the sensible monumẽts, both of thine ascension, & return; Let no cloud

cloud of Worldlinesſ,or Infidelity hinder me frõ following thee in thine Aſcenſion,or from expecting thee in thy returne.

VIII.

Vpon the ſight of a grave digged up.

THe Earth, as it is a great devourer, ſo alſo it is a great preſerver too: Liquors and Fleſhes are therein long kept from putrifying; and are rather heightned in their Spirits by being buried in it; But above all, how ſafely doth it keepe our bo-

bodyes for the Reſurre-ction; we are here but layd up for cuſtody; Balmes, and fere-clothes, and leads, cannot doe ſo much as this lap of our common Mother; when al theſe are diſſolved into her duſt (as being unable to keep themſelves from corruption) ſhe receives and reſtores her charge. I can no more with-hold my body from the earth then the earth can with-hold it from my Maker. O GOD, this is thy Ca-binet or ſhrine, wherein thou pleaſeſt to lay up the precious reliques of thy deare Saints, untill the Jubilee of Glory, with

with what confidence should I commit my self to this sure repositon, whiles I know thy word just, thy power infinite?

IX.

Vpon the sight of Gold melted.

THis Gold is both the faireſt, and moſt ſolide of all metals; yet is the ſooneſt melted with the fire; others, as they are courſer, ſo more churliſh, and hard to bee wrought upõ by a diſſolution; Thus, a ſound and good heart is moſt eaſily melted

melted into ſorrow and feare, by the ſenſe of Gods judgements; whereas the carnall minde is ſtubburne, and remorſeleſſe; All metals are but earth, yet ſome are of finer temper then others; All hearts are of fleſh, yet ſome are, through the power of grace, more capable of *Spirituall* apprehenſions: O GOD, wee are ſuch as thou wilt bee pleaſed to make us: Give me a heart that may bee ſound for the truth of Grace, & melting at the terrors of thy Law, I can be for no other, then thy Sanctuary on earth, or thy Treaſury of heaven.

X.

Vpõ the sight of a pitcher carried.

THus those that are great, and weake, are carryed by the eares up and downe of Flatterers, & Parasites; Thus ignorant and simple hearers are carried by false and mis-zealous teachers; yet to be carryed by both eares is more safe, then bee caryed by one; It argues an empty pitcher to be carryed by one alone; such are they that upon the hearing of one part, rashly passe their sentence,

ence, whether of acquittall, or censure.

In all disquisitions of hidden Truthes, a wise man will bee led by the eares, not carried; that implies a violence of passion over-swaying judgment; but in matter of civill occurrence, and unconcerning rumour, it is good to use the Eare, not to trust to it.

XI.

XI.

Vpon the sight of a Tree full blossomed.

HEere is a tree over-layd with blossomes, it is not possible that all these should prosper; one of them must needs rob the other of moisture & growth; I do not love to see an Infãcy over-hopefull; in these pregnant beginnings one facultie starves another, and, at last, leaves the minde sap-lesse, and barren; as therefore wee are wont to pull off some of the too-frequent blossomes, that the rest may thriue;

So,

So, it is good wiſdome to moderate the earely exceſſe of the parts, or progres of over-forward child-hood. Neither is it otherwiſe in our Chriſtian profeſſion; a ſudden and laviſh oſtentation of grace may fill the eye with wonder, and the mouth with talke, but will not at the laſt fil the lappe with fruit.

Let mee not promiſe too much, nor raiſe too high expectations of my undertakings; I had rather men ſhould complaine of my ſmal hopes, then of my ſhort performances.

XII.

XII.

Vpon the report of a man suddenly strucke dead in his Sin.

I Cannot but magnifie the justice of God, but withall I must praise his Mercy; It were woe with any of us all, if GOD should take us at advantages; Alas, which of us hath not committed sins worthy of a present revenge? had we beene also surprized in those acts where had we beene? Oh God it is more then thou owest us, that thou hast wayted

wayted for our repentance; It is no more then thou oweſt us, that thou plagueſt our offéces. The wages of ſin is Death, & it is but juſtice to pay due wages: Bleſſed bee thy Juſtice that haſt made others examples to mee: Bleſſed be thy Mercy that haſt not made me an example unto others.

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XIII.

XIII.

Vpon the view of the hea ven and the earth.

VVHat a strange co trariety is heere The Heaven is in cont nuall motion, and ye there is the onely plac of rest; the earth eve stands still, and yet heer is nothing but unrest an unquietnesse; Surely, th end of that heavenly mo tion is for the benefit o the Earth; and the end o all these earthly tur moyles is our reposall i heaven; Those that hav imagined the earth t turne about, and the hea

ven

vens to ſtand ſtill, have yet ſuppoſed that wee may ſtand or ſit ſtill, on that whirling Globe of earth: how much more may we be perſwaded of our perfect reſt above thoſe moving Spheares? It matters not O GOD, how I am vexed heere below a while; if, ere long, I may repoſe with thee above, for ever.

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XIIII.

XIIII.

Vpon occasion of a Red-breast comming into his Chamber.

PRETTY Bird, how chearfully dost thou sit & sing, and yet knoweſt not where thou art, nor where thou ſhalt make thy next meale; & at night muſt ſhrowd thy ſelfe in a buſh, for lodging: What a ſhame is it for mee, that ſee before mee ſo liberall proviſions of my GOD, and finde my ſelfe ſet warme under my owne roof, yet am ready to droup under

a

a distrustfull, & unthankful dulnesse. Had I so little certainty of my harbour & purveyance, how hartless should I be, how carefull; how little list should I have to make musicke to thee or my selfe? Surely, thou camest not hither without a providence; GOD sent thee not so much to delight, as to shame mee, but all in a conviction of my sullen unbeliefe, who under more apparent meanes, am lesse cheerefull, and confident, Reason and Faith have not done so much in mee, as in thee, meere instinct of nature, wit of fore-sight

makes thee more merry, if not more happy here, the the fore-sight of better things maketh mee.

O God, thy providence is not impayred by those Powers thou hast given me above these brute things, let not my greater helps hinder me from an holy security, & comfortable relyance upon thee.

XV.

Vpō occasion of a Spider in his window.

There is no vice in man, whereof there is not some analogie in the brute Creatures: As amongst

amongst us Men; there are Theeves by land, and Pirates by sea, that live by spoyle and blood; so is there in every kind amongst them variety of naturall Sharkers; the Hauke in the ayre, the Pike in the river, the Whale in the sea, the Lyon, & Tyger, and Wolfe in the desert, the Waspe in the hive, the Spider in our window. Amongst the rest, see how cunningly this little Arabia hath spred out his tent, for a prey; how heedfully hee watches for a Passenger; so soon as ever he heares the noyse of a Fly a farre off, how he hastens to his

doore, and if that silly heedlesse Traveller doe but touch upo the verge of that unsuspected walk how suddenly doth hee seize upon the miserable bootie; and after some strife, binding him fast with those subtile cords, drags the helplesse captive after him into his cave. What is this but an Embleme of those Spiritual free-booters, that lie in waite for our soules: They are the Spiders, we the Flies; they have spred their nets of sin, if we be once caught, they bind us fast, & hale us into Hell.

Oh LORD, deliver thou my soule from their crafty

crafty ambuſhes ; their poyſon is greater, their webs both more ſtrong, and more inſenſible woven; Either teach mee to avoyd tentation, or make me to breake thorough it by Repentance; Oh let mee not bee a prey to thoſe fiends that lye in wait for my deſtruction.

C 3 CHAP.

XVI.

Vpõ the sight of a Raine in the Sun-shine.

SUch is my best condition in this life, If the Sunne of Gods countenance shine upon me, I may well bee content to be wet with some raine of Affliction; How oft have I seene the heaven over-cast with clouds & tempest; no Sun appearing to comfort me; yet even those gloomy and stormy seasons have I rid out patiently, onely with the help of the common light of the day, at last, those beames have bro-

ken

ken forth happily, and cheared my Soule; It is well for my ordinary ſtate, if through the miſts of my own dulneſſe, and Satans tentations, I can diſcery ſome glimpſe of heavenly comfort; let me never hope, whiles I am in this Vaile, to ſee the cleare face of that Sunne without a ſhowre: ſuch happineſs is reſerved for above; that upper region of glory is free frō theſe doubtful & miſerable viciſſitudes. There, O God wee ſhall ſee as wee are ſeene. Light is ſowne for the Righteous, and joy for the upright in heart.

XVII.

Upon the Length of the way.

HOw farre off is yonder great Mountaine? My very eye is weary with the foresight of so great a distance; yet time & patience shall overcome it; this night wee shall hope to lodge beyond it; Some things are more tedious in their expectation, then in their performance. The comfort is, that every step I take, sets mee nearer to my end; When I once come there, I shall both forget how long it now seemes,

seemes, and please my selfe to looke backe upõ the way that I have measured.

It is thus in our passage to Heaven; my weake nature is ready to faint under the very cõceit of the length, and difficulty of this journey; my eye doth not more guide, thẽ discourage meo; Many steps of Grace, and true obedience, shal bring me insensibly thither; Only, let me move, and hope; and Gods good leisure shall perfect my Salvation. O Lord, give mee to possesse my Soule with patience, & not so much to regard speed, as certainty;

tainty; When I come to the top of thine holy hil, all the fe weary paces, and deepe sloughes shall either bee forgotten, or contribute to my happinesse in their remembrance.

XVIII.

Upon the Raine and Waters.

WHat a sensible interchange there is in nature, betwixt union, and division; Many vapours rising from the sea, meete together in one cloud; that cloud falls downe

downe divided into ſeverall drops; thoſe drops run together, & in many rills of water meete in the ſame channels; thoſe channels runne into the brook, thoſe brooks into the rivers, thoſe rivers into the Sea; one receptacle is for all, though a large one; and all make backe to their firſt, and maine originall: So it either is, or ſhould be with Spirituall gifts; O God, thou diſtilleſt thy Graces upō us, not for our reſervation, but conveyance; thoſe manyfold faculties thou letteſt fall upon ſeverall Men thou wouldſt not have drenched up, where

where they light; but wouldest have derived, through the chanels of their speciall vocations, into the cõmon streames of publique Vse, for Church, or Commonwealth; Take backe, O Lord, those few drops thou hast rayned upon my soule, and returne thẽ into that great Ocean of the Glory of thine owne bounty, from whence they had their beginning.

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XIX.

Vpon the same Subject.

MAny drops fill the Chanels, and many Chanels swell up the brooks, and many brooks raise the Rivers over the bankes; the brookes are not out, till the chanels bee empty; the rivers rise not, whiles the small brookes are ful; but when the little rivulets have once voyded themselves into the mayne streames, then all is overflowne. Great matters arise from small beginnings. Many littles make up a large bulke; Yea what is the World

World but a compositi-
on of atomes. Wee have
seene it thus in civill e-
states; the empayring of
the Commons hath oft
beene the raising of the
great; their streames
have run low, till they
have beene heightened
by the confluence of ma-
ny private inlets: Many a
meane channel hath been
emptyed to make up
their inundation; Nei-
ther is it otherwise in my
whether outward or spi-
rituall condition: O God
thou hast multiplyed my
drops into streames, As
out of many minuts thou
hast made up my age, so
out of many lessons thou
hast

hast made up my competencie of knowledge; thou hast drayned many beneficient friends to make me competently rich. By many holy motions, thou hast wrought me to some measure of Grace:

Oh, teach mee, wisely and moderately to injoy thy bounty, & to reduce thy streames into thy drops, and thy drops into thy clouds, humbly, and thankefully acknowledging whence, and how, I have all that I have, all that I am.

XX.

XX.

Vpon occasiõ of the lights brought in.

WHat a chãge there is in the roome, since the light came in; yea in our selves? All things seeme to have a new forme, a new life; yea, we are not the same we were: How goodly a creature is light, how pleasing, how agreeable to the spirits of man? no visible thing comes so neere to the resembling of the nature of the soule yea of the *God* that made it; As contrarily, what an uncomfortable thing

is

is darkneſſe; in ſo much as wee puniſh the greateſt malefactors with obſcuritie of Dungeons; as thinking they could not be miſerable enough, if they might have the priviledge of beholding the light; yea, hell it ſelfe can be no more horribly deſcribed then by outward darkneſſe:

What is darkneſſe but abſence of light? The pleaſure or the horror of light, or darkneſſe is according to the quality and degree of the cauſe, whence it ariſeth; And if the light of a poore cadle be ſo comfortable, which is nothing but a little in-

flamed

flamed ayre, gathered about a moystened snuffe, what is the light of the glorious Sun, the great lampe of Heaven? But much more what is the light of that infinitely resplendent Sun of righteousnesse, who gave that light to the Sunne, that Sun to the world; And, if this partiall, and imperfect darkenesse be so dolefull, (which is the privation of a naturall or artificiall light) how unconceivable, dolorous, and miserable shall that bee, which is caused through the utter absence of the all-glorious God, who is the Father of lights?

lights? O Lord, how justly do wee pitty those wretched Soules, that sit in darkenesse & the shadow of death, shut up from the light of the saving knowledge of thee, the onely true God; But, how am I swallowed up with horror, to thinke of the fearefull condition of those dãned soules, that are for ever shut out frõ the presence of GOD, & adjudged to exquisite & everlasting darkenesse. The Egyptiãs were weary of themselves, in their three dayes darkness, yet we do not find any paine that accompanyed their continuing night; What shall

shall we say to those wofull soules, in whom the sensible presence of infinite torment shall meet with the torment of the perpetuall absence of GOD? O thou, who art the true light, shine ever through all the blinde corners of my Soule, and from these weake glimmerings of Grace, bring me to the perfect brightnesse of thy Glory.

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XXI.

XXI.

Vpon the same Occasion.

AS well as wee love the light, wee are wont to salute it, at the first comming in, with winking, or closed eyes; as not abiding to see that, without which wee cannot see. All sudden changes (though to the better) have a kinde of trouble attending them; By how much more excellent any object is, by so much more is our weake sense mis-affected in the first apprehending of it: O Lord, if thou shouldest manifest thy glo-

glorious presence to us heere, wee should bee confounded in the sight of it; How wisely, how mercifully hast thou reserved that for our glorified estate; where no infirmity shall dazle our eyes; where perfect righteousnesse shall give as perfect boldnesse, both of sight and fruition.

XXII.

Upon the blowing of the Fire.

WEe beat backe the flame, not with a purpose to suppresse it, but

but to raise it higher, & to diffuse it more; Those afflictions, and repulses which seeme to bee discouragements, are indeed the merciful incitements of grace. If GOD did meane judgement to my soule, hee would either withdraw the fuell, or powre water upō the fire, or suffer it to languish for want of new motiōs, but now, that he cōtinues to me the meanes, & opportunities, & desires of good, I shall misconstrue the intentions of my GOD, if I shall thinke his crosses sent rather to dampe, then to quicken his Spirit in me.

O GOD, if thy bellowes did not sometimes thus breath upon me, in spirituall repercussions, I should have just cause to suspect my estate; Those few weake gleeds of Grace that are in mee, might soone goe out, if they were not thus refreshed; still blow upon them, till they kindle; still kindle them till they flame up to thee.

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XXIII.

XXIII.

Vpō the barking of a dog.

WHat have I done to this Dog, that hee followes me with this angry clamour? Had I rated him, or ſhakē my ſtaffe, or ſtooped downe for a ſtone, I had juſtly drawne ſo on this noyſe; this ſnarling importunity. But, why, doe I wonder to finde this unquiet diſpoſition in a bruit creature, when it is no newes with the reaſonable?

Have I not ſeen innocence, & merit bayed at by the quarrelſome, and

envious vulgar, without any provocation save of good offices? Have I not felt (more then their tongue,) their teeth, upō my heeles, when I know I have deserved nothing, but fawning on? Where is my grace, or spirits, if I have not learned to cō-temne both?

O GOD, let mee rather dye then willingly incurre thy displeasure; yea, then justly offend thy godly-wise, judicious, conscionable servants; but if humor or faction, or causelesse prejudice fall upon mee; for my faithfull service to thee; Let these bawling curres

curres tyre themselves, and teare their throates, with loud, and false censures, I go on in a silent constancy, and if my eare bee beaten, yet my heart shall be free.

XXIIII.

Vpon sight of a Cocke fight.

HOw fell these Creatures out? Whence grew this so bloudy cõbate? Heere was neyther old grudge, nor present injurie. What then is the quarrell? Surely nothing but that which

should rather unite, and reconcile them; one cõmon Natute; they are both of one feather. I doe not see eyther of them flye upon Creatures of different kinds; but whiles they have peace with al others, they are at war with thẽselves the very sight of each other was sufficiẽt provocation. If this be the offence, why doth not each of them fall out with himselfe, since hee hates, and revenges in another, the being of that same which himselfe is?

Since Mans sin brought Debate into the World, nature

nature is become a great quarreller.

The seeds of discord were scattered in every furrow of the Creation, & came up in a numberlesse variety of antipathies, whereof yet none is more odious, and deplorable, thē those which are betwixt creatures of the same kind. What is this but an image of that woeful hostility which is exercised betwixt us resonables, who are conjoyned in one common humanity, if not, Religion?

We fight with, and destroy each other, more then those creatures that want reason to temper

their passions: No beast is so cruel to man, as himselfe; where one man is slain by a beast, ten thousand are slaine by man. What is that war which wee study and practise, but the art of killing? What ever Turkes and Pagans may do, O Lord how long shall this brutish fury arme Christiãs against each other: whiles even divels are not at enmity with thãselves, but accord in wickednesse, why do we men so mortally oppose each other in good?

Oh thou, that art the God of Peace, compose the unquiet hearts of mẽ

to an happy and universall Concord, and at last refresh our Soules with the multitude of Peace.

XXV.

Upon his lying downe to rest.

WHat a circle there is of humane actions, and events? Wee are never without some change, and yet that change is without any great variety; we sleepe, and wake; and wake and sleepe; and eate and evacuate

cuate, labour in a continuall interchange, yet hath the infinite wisdome of GOD, so ordered it, that wee are not weary of these perpetual iterations but with no lesse appetite enter into our daily courses, then if wee should passe them but once in our life. When I am weary of my daies labor, how willingly do I undresse my selfe, and betake my self to my bed; and ere morning, when I have wearied my restlesse bed, how glad am I to rise, and renew my labour?

Why am I not more desirous to be unclothed of

of this body that I may be cloathed upon with immortality? What is this but my closest garment, which when it is once put off, my Soule is at liberty and ease. Many a time have I lyen down heere in desire of rest, & after some tedious chāging of sides, have risen sleeplesse, disappointed, lāguishing; In my last uncasing, my body shall not faile of repose, nor my Soule of joy; and in my *rising* up, neither of them shall *faile* of Glory; what hinders mee, O God, but my *Infidelitie* from longing for this happy dissolution? The world

hath misery and toyle enough, and Heaven hath more then enough blessednesse to perfect my desires of that my last & glorious change. I beleeve, Lord, helpe my unbeleefe.

XXVI.

Vpon the kindling of a Charcole fire.

THere are not many Creatures but doe naturally affect to diffuse and inlarge themselves; fire and Water will neyther of them rest cõtented with their owne bounds;

bouds, those little sparks that I see in those coales, how they spread, and enkindle their next brands; It is thus morally both in good, and evill; eyther of them dilates it selfe, to their Neighbourhood; but especially this is so much more apparent in evil, by how much we are more apt to take it. Let but some sparke of heretical opinion be let fall upon some unstable, proud, busie spirit, it catcheth instantly; and fires the next capable subject; they two have easily inflamed a third; and now the more society, the more speed, and ad-

aduantage of a publike combustiõ. When we see the Church on a flame, it is too late to complaine of the flint and steele; It is the holy wisdome of superiours to prevent the dangerous attritions of stubborne, & wrangling spirits; or to quench their first sparkes in the tinder.

But, why should not Grace and Truth bee as successefull in dilating it self to the gaining of many hearts; certainly these are in themselves more winning, if our corruptiõ had not made us indisposed to good: O God, out of an holy envy & emulatiõ at the speed of evil,

I shall labour to enkindle others with these heavēly flames, it shall not be my fault if they spread not.

XXVII.

Vpon the sight of an humble and patient Begger.

SEe what need can do; This man, who in so lowly a fashion croucheth to that Passenger, hath in all likelyhood as good a stomacke as hee, to whom he thus abaseth himself; and if their conditions were but altered, would

would looke as high, and ſpeake as bigge to him, whom he now anſwers with a plauſible and dejected reverence.

It is thus betwixt God, and us: He ſees the way to tame us, is to hold us ſhort of theſe earthly cõtentments: Even the Savageſt Beaſts are made quiet and docible, with want of food, and reſt; Oh GOD, thou onely knoweſt what I would doe, if I had health, eaſe, abundance; doe thou in thy wiſdome and mercy ſo proportion thy gifts, and reſtraints, as thou knowſt beſt for my ſoule. If I bee not humbled enough,

nough, lot mee want; and so order all my estate, that I may wãt any thing save thy selfe.

XXVIII.

Vpon the sight of a Crow pulling off wooll from the backe of a Sheepe.

HOw well these Creatures know whom they may bee bold with? That Crow durst not do this to a Wolfe, or a Mastive; The knowne simplicity of this innocent beast gives advantage to this presumption.

Meeke-

Meekenesse of spirit commonly drawes on injuries.

The cruelty of ill natures usually seekes out those, not who deserve worst, but who wil beare most.

Patience and mildnesse of Spirit is ill bestowed where it exposes a man to wrong & insultation;

Sheepish dispositions are best to others; worst to themselves. I could be willing to take injuries; but I wil not be guilty of provoking them by lenity; for harmlesnesse let me goe for a Sheepe, but whosoever will beare tearing

ring my fleece; let him looke to himselfe.

XXIX.

Vpon the sight of two Snayles.

THere is much variety even in Creatures of the same kind. See there, two Snayles; One hath an house, the other wants it; yet both are Snayles, & it is a question whether case is the better; That which hath an house hath more shelter, but that which wants it, hath more freedome; The priviledge of that cover

cover is but a burthen; you see if it have but a stone to clime over, with what stresse it drawes up that beneficiall lode; and if the passage prove strait finds no entrãce: whereas the empty Snayle makes no difference of way; Surely, it is alwayes an ease, and sometimes an happinesse to have nothing; no man is so worthy of envy as he that can be cheerfull in want.

XXX.

XXX.

Vpon the hearing of the ſtreet cries in London.

WHat a noyſe doe theſe poore ſoules make in proclaiming their commodities? each tels what he hath, and would have all hearers take notice of it; and yet (God wot) it is but poore ſtuffe that they ſet out, with ſo much oſtentatiō; I doe not heare any of the rich Merchants talke of what bags he hath in his cheſts, or what treaſures of rich wares in his ſtore-houſe; every man rather

rather desires to hide his wealth; and when he is urged, is ready to dissemble his ability. No otherwise is it in the true spirituall riches; he that is full of Grace, & good-workes, affects not to make shew of it to the world, but rests sweetly in the secret testimony of a good Conscience; and the silent applause of Gods spirit witnessing with his owne; whiles contrarily the venditation of our owne worth, or parts, or merits, argues a miserable indigence in them all; O God, if the confessing of thine owne gifts may glorifie thee, my

my modesty shal not bee guilty of a niggardly unthankfulnesse; but for ought that concernes my selfe, I cannot bee too secret; Let me so hide my selfe that I may not wrong thee; and wisely distinguish betwixt thy praise, and my owne.

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XXXI.

XXXI.

Vpon the Flies gathering to a galled Horse.

HOw these Flyes swarme to the galled part of this poore Beast; and there sit feeding upō that worst peece of his flesh, not medling with the other sound parts of his skin; Even thus doe malicious tongues of Detractors; if a manhave any infirmity in his person or actions, that they wil be sure to gather unto, and dwel upon: whereas his cōmendable parts

and

and well-deſervings are paſſed by, without mention, without regard; It is an envious ſelfe-love, & baſe cruelty that cauſeth this ill diſpoſition in men; In the meane time this onely they have gained, it muſt needs bee a filthy Creature, that feeds upon nothing but corruption.

XXXII.

XXXII.

Vpon the sight of a darke Lanthorne.

THere is light indeed, but so shut up, as if it were not; and when the side is most open, there is light enough to give direc&tiō to him that beares it, none to others: He can discerne another man by that light, which is cast before him, but another man cānot discerne him; Right such is reserved knowledge; no man is the better for it, but the owner; there is no outward difference betwixt concealed skill; and ignorance

norance; and when such hidden knowledge will looke forth, it casts so sparing a light, as may only argue it to have an unprofitable being; to have ability, without will to good; power to censure, none to benefit: the suppression or ingrossing of those helps which God would have us to impart is but a Theeves Lanthorn in a true mans hand; Oh GOD, as all our light is frō thee, the Father of lights, so make mee no niggard of that poore Rush-candle thou hast lighted in my soule; make me more happy in giving light to others,

then in receiving it into my selfe.

XXXIII.

Upon the hearing of a Swallow in the Chimney.

HEre is Musicke, such as it is, but how long will it hold! When but a cold morning comes in, my guest is gone, without eyther warning, or thanks; This pleasant season hath the least need of cheerfull notes; the dead of winter shall want, and wish them in vaine: Thus doth an ungrateful Parasite:

site: no man is more ready to applaud, and injoy our prosperity, but when with the times our condition begins to alter, he is a stranger at least; Give me that Bird which will sing in winter, and seeke to my window in the hardest frost; there is no tryall of friendship but adversity; He that is not ashamed of my bods; not daunted with my checks, not alienated with my disgrace, is a friend for me; One dram of that mans love, is worth a world of false and inconstant formality.

XXXIIII.

XXXIIII.

Upon the sight of a Flie burning it selfe in the Candle.

WIse SALOMON sayes, the light is a pleasant thing; and so certainly it is; but there is no true outward light which proceeds not frō fire; The light of that fire thē is not more pleasing, then the fire of that light is dangerous; and that pleasure doth not more draw on our sight, then that danger forbids our approach: How fooliſh is this flye, that in a love and admiration of this light,

light, will know no distance, but puts it selfe heedlesly into that flame wherin it perishes; How many boutes it fetcht, every one nearer then other, ere it made this last venture; and now that mercilesse fire taking no notice of the affection of an over-fond Cliet, hath suddenly consumed it; Thus doe those bold and busie *Spirits*, who will needs draw too neer unto that inaccessible light; and look into things too wonderfull for them, So long doe they hover about the secret counsailes of the Almighty, till the wings of their presump-

tuous conceits be scorched, and their daring curiositie hath paid them with everlasting distruction; Oh Lord, let me bee blessed with the knowledge of what thou hast revealed, Let me content my self to adore thy divine wisedome in what thou hast not revealed; so let mee injoy thy light, that I may avoyd thy fire.

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XXXV.

Vpon the sight of a Lark flying up.

HOw nimbly doth that little Lark mount up singing towards Heaven, in a right line; wheras the Hauke, which is stronger of body, and swifter of wing, towres up by many graduall compasses to his highest pitch? that bulke of body, and length of wing hinders a direct ascent, and requires the helpe both of ayre, and scope to advance his flight; whiles that small bird cuts the ayre without resistance, and needs

no outward furtherance of her motion; It is no otherwise with the soules of men in flying up to their Heaven; some are hindred by those powers which would seem helps to their soaring up thither; great wit, deepe judgement, quicke apprehension, sends men about with no small labour for the recovery of their own incombrance; whiles the good affectiõ of plaine simple soules raises thẽ up immediately, to the fruitiõ of God; why should we be proud of that which may slacken our way to Glory; why should wee bee dis-

hartened

hartened with the ſmall meaſure of that, the very want wherof may (as the heart may be affected) facilitate our way to happineſſe?

XXXVI.

Vpon the ſinging of the Birds in a Spring morning.

HOw cheereſully doe theſe little Birds chirp and ſing out of the naturall joy they cõceive at the approach of the Sun, and entrance of the ſpring; as if their life had departed, and returned

with those glorious and comfortable beames; No otherwise is the penitent and faithfull soule affected to the true Sunne of Righteousnes, the Father of lights? When he hides his face, it is troubled, & silently mournes away that sad Winter of Affliction; when he returns, in his presence is the fulnesse of joy; no song is cheerefull enough to welcome him; Oh thou, who art the God of all consolation, make my heart sensible of the sweet comforts of thy gracious presence; and let my mouth ever show forth thy praise.

XXXVII.

XXXVII.

Vpon a Coale covered with ashes.

NOthing appeares in this heape, but dead ashes; here is neyther light, nor smoake, nor heate, and yet, when I stirre up these embers to the bottome, there are found some living gleeds, which doe both containe fire, & are apt to propagate it; Many a Christians breast is like this hearth; no life of Grace appeares there, for the time, eyther to his owne sense, or to the apprehension of others, whiles the

the season of temptation lasteth, all seemes cold and dead; yet still at the worst, there is a secret coale from the Altar of Heaven rak't up in their bosome; which upon the gracious motions of the Almighty, doth both bewray some remainders of that divine fire, and is easily raised to a perfect flame; Nothing is more dangerous then to judge by appearances: Why should I deject my selfe, or censure others for the utter extinction of that spirit, which doth but hide it selfe in the soule for a glorious advantage?

XXXVIII.

Vpō the sight of a Blackmore.

LOe, there is a Man whose hew shewes him to bee farre from home, his very skin bewrayes his Climate; it is night in his face, whiles it is day in ours; What a difference there is in mē, both in their fashion and colour; and yet all Children of one Father? Neither is there lesse variety in their insides; their dispositions, judgements, opinions differ as much as their shapes, and complexions; That which is

beauty

beauty to one; is deformity to another? Wee should be lookt upon in this mans Country, with no lesse wonder, and strange coyneſſe, then he is here; our whiteneſſe would passe there for an unpleasing indigestion of forme; Outward beauty is more in the eye of the beholder, then in the face that is seene; in every colour, that is faire which pleaseth: The very *Spouse* of Christ can say, I am blacke but comely; this is our colour *Spiritually*, yet the eye of our gracious God and Saviour can see that beautie in us wherwith he is delighted

The

The true *Moſes* marries a Blackemore, CHRIST his Church: It is not for us to regard the skin, but the Soule: If that bee innocent, pure, holy, the blots of an out-ſide cannot ſet us off from the love of him who hath ſaid; Behold, thou art faire my Sister, my ſpouſe; if that be foule & blacke, it is not in the power of an Angelicall brightneſſe of our hide, to make us other then a loathſome eye-ſore to the Almighty; O GOD, make my inſide lovely to thee; I know that beauty will hold; whiles weather, caſualty, age, diſeaſe may

may deforme the outer man, and marre both colour and features.

XXXIX.

Vpon the small Stars in the Galaxie or milkie Circle in the Firmament.

WHat a cleere lightsomneſſe there is in yonder Circle of the Heaven above the reſt? What can wee ſuppoſe the reaſon of it, but that the light of many ſmaller ſtarres is united there, and cauſes that conſtant brightneſſe? And yet thoſe ſmal ſtarres are not dif-

discerned whiles the splẽdor which ariseth from them is so notably remarkable: In this lower heaven of ours, many a man is made cõspicuous by his good qualities, & deserts, but I most admire the humility and grace of those, whose vertues & merits are usefully visible, whiles their persons are obscure; It is secretly glorious for a man to shine unseene; Doubtles it is the height that makes those stars so small, & insensible; were they lower, they would be seene more; there is no true greatnesse without a selfe-humiliation;

we,

we ſhall have made an ill uſe of our advancemẽt, if by how much higher we are, wee doe not appeare leſſe; if our light be ſeen, it matters not for our hiding.

XL.

Vpon the ſight of Boyes playing.

EVery age hath ſome peculiar cõtentment; Thus wee did, when wee were of theſe yeares; Me thinkes I ſtill remember the old fervour of my young paſtimes. With what eagerneſſe and paſſion do they purſue theſe Chil-

Childish sports; Now, that there is a whole handfull of cherry-stones at the stake, how neare is that boyes heart to his mouth, for feare of his play-fellowes next cast? & how exalted with desire and hope of his owne speed; those great unthrifts who hazard whole Mannors upō the Dice, cannot expect their chance with more earnestnesse, or entertaine it with more joy, or griefe: We cannot but now smile to thinke of these poore and foolish pleasures of our Childhood; there is no lesse disdaine that the Regenetate man con-

conceives of the deareſt delights of his naturall condition; He was once jolly, and iocond, in the fruition of the world: feaſts & revels, & games, & dalliãce were his life; & no mã could be happy without theſe; and ſcarce any man but himſelf; but when once Grace hath made him both good & wiſe, how ſcornefully doth hee looke backe at theſe fond felicities of his carnall eſtate; now he findes more manly, more divine contentments; & wonders he could be ſo tranſported with his former vanity. Pleaſures are much according as they

are

are esteemed, One mans delight is another mans paine; Onely Spirituall and Heavenly things can settle & satiate the heart with a full and firme contentation; Oh God, thou art not capable eyther of bettering, or of change; let me injoy thee; and I shall pitty the miserable fickleneſſe of thoſe that want thee; and shall bee sure to bee constantly happy.

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XLI.

XLI.

Vpõ the sight of a spider and her Web.

HOw justly doe wee admire the curious worke of this Creature? what a thred doth it spin forth? What a web doth it weave? Yet it is full of deadly poyson; There may bee much venome, where is much Art; Just like to this is a learned, & witty Heretick; fine conceits, & elegant expressions fall from him, but his opiniõs & secretly-couched doctrines are dãgerous & mortal; were not that man strangely foolish,

lish, who because he likes the artificiall drawing out of that web, would therfore desire to handle or eate the Spider that made it? Such should bee our madnes, if our wonder at the skill of a false teacher should cast us into love with his person, or familiarity with his writings; there can be no safety in our judgement or affection, without a wise distinction; in the want whereof wee must needs wrong God, or our selves: God, if we acknowledge not what excellent parts he gives to any Creature; our selves if upon the allowance of those

those excellencies, wee swallow their most dangerous enormities.

XLII.

Vpon the sight of a Naturall.

OH God, why am not I thus? What hath this man done, that thou hast denyed wit to him? or what have I done that thou shouldest give a competency of it to mee? What difference is there betwixt us but thy bounty, which hath bestowed upon mee what I could not merit, & hath withheld

held from him what hee could not challenge. All is, O God, in thy good pleasure, whether to give or deny; Neither is it otherwise in matter of Grace. The unregenerate man is a Spirituall foole; no man is truely wise but the renewed; how is it, that whiles I see another man besotted with the vanity and corruption of his nature; I have attained to know God, and the great mystery of salvation, to abhorre those sins wch are pleasing to a wicked appetite? Who hath discerned me? Nothing but thy free mercy O my God; why else was

I a man not a brute beast? Why right shaped, not a Monster? Why perfectly limmed, not a cripple? Why well-sensed, not a foole? Why wel affected not graceles? why a *vessel* of honour, not of wrath? If ought be not ill in me, O LORD, it is thine, Oh let thine bee the praise, and mine the thankfulnesse.

XLIII.

Vpon the Loadstone and the Iett.

AS there is a civill cõmerce amongst men for the preservation of humane society, so there is a naturall commerce which God hath set amongst the other Creatures for the maintenãce of their common being; There is scarce any thing therfore in nature, which hath not a power of attracting some other; The fire drawes vapors to it, the Sun drawes the fire. Plants drawe moysture, the Moone drawes the

Sea, all purgative things draw their proper humors, a naturall instinct drawes all sensitive creatures to affect their own kinde; and even in those things which are of imperfect mixtion, wee see this experimented, So as the senseleſſe ſtones & metals are not voyd of this active vertue; the loadſtone draws Iron; and the jett, rather then nothing, drawes up ſtrawes, and duſt; with what a force doe both theſe ſtones worke upon their ſeverall ſubjects; is there any thing more heavy and unapt for motion then Iron, or ſteele?

Yet

Yet these do so runne to their beloved loadstone, as if they had the sense of a desire and delight; and doe so cling to the point of it, as if they had forgotten their weight for this adherence. Is there any thing more apt for dispersion then small strawes, & dust? yet these gather to the jett, and so sensibly leape up to it, as if they had a kind of ambitiō to be so preferred;

Me thinks, I see in these two a meere embleme of the hearts of mē, & their *spirituall* attractives; The grace of Gods *spirit*, like the true Loadstone, or Adamant, drawes up the

yron heart of man to it, and holds it in a constant fixednesse of holy purposes, and good actions; The world like the Jett drawes up the sensuall hearts of light and vaine men, and holds them fast in the pleasures of sinne. I am thine yron, O Lord, be thou my Loadstone. Draw thou me and I shall run after thee: Knit my heart unto thee that I may feare thy name.

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XLIIII.

XLIIII.

Vpon hearing of Musicke by night.

HOw sweetly doth this Musick sound in this dead season? In the day time it would not, it could not so much affect the eare? All harmonious sounds are advanced by a silent darkenesse; Thus it is with the glad tidings of Salvation; The Gospell never sounds so sweet, as in the night of persecution, or of our owne private affliction; It is ever the same, the difference is in our dispositiõ to receive it. O God

whoſe prayſe it is to give ſongs in the night, make my proſperity cõſciona-ble, and my croſſes cheer-full.

XLV.

Vpõ the fãning of Corne.

SEe how in the fanning of this Wheat, the fulleſt & greateſt graines lye ever the loweſt; and the lighteſt take up the higheſt place; It is no o-therwiſe in mortality: thoſe which are moſt humble, are fulleſt of Grace; & oft times thoſe have moſt conſpicuity, which have the leaſt ſub-ſtance;

ſtance; to affect obſcurity or ſubmiſſion, is baſe and ſuſpicious; but that man whoſe modeſty preſents him meane to his owne eyes, & lowly to others, is cõmonly ſecretly rich in vertue; give me rather a low fulnes then an empty advancement.

XLVI.

Vpon Herbs dryed.

THey ſay thoſe herbes will keepe beſt, and will longer retaine both their hewe and verdure, which are dryed thus in the ſhade, then thoſe wch are ſuddainly ſcor-

ched with fire, or Sunne.

Those wits are like to bee most durable, which are closely tutored with a leisurely education:

Time and gentle constancy ripens better then a suddaine violence; neyther is it otherwise in our spirituall condition: A wilfull slackenesse is not more dangerous, then an over-hastening of our perfection; If I may be every moment drawing nearer to the end of my hope, I shall not wish to precipitate.

XLVII.

XLVII.

Vpon the quenching of Iron in water.

HArke how that Iron quenched in the water hiſſeth, & makes that noyſe, which whiles it was cold or dry, it would never make; wee cannot quench hot and unruly deſires in youth without ſome mutiny, & rebellious oppoſition.

Corruptions cannot be ſubdued without ſome reluctation, and that reluctation cānot be without ſome tumult: After ſome ſhort noyſe, and ſmoake, & bubbling, the metall is quiet and holds to

to the forme, whereinto it is beaten, O God, why should it trouble me to finde my good indeauours resisted, for the little brunt of a change, whiles I am sure this insurrection shall end in an happy peace?

XLVIII.

Vpõ a faire coloured Fly

WHat a pleasant mixture of colors there is in this Flye; and yet they say, no flye is so venomous as this; which by the outward touch of the hand corrodes

rodes the inmoſt paſſages of the body;

It is no truſting to colours, and ſhapes; wee may wonder at their excellency; without dotage vpon their Beauty. Homelineſſe makes leſſe ſhew, and hath leſſe danger; Give me inward vertue and uſefulneſſe; let others care for outward glory.

XLIX.

Vpon a Glow-worme.

WHat a cold Candle is lighted up in the body of this ſorry

sorry Worme? There needs no other disproofe of those that say there is no light at all without some heate; Yet sure an outward heate helps on this coole light: Never did I see any of these bright wormes but in the hot moneths of Summer; in cold seasons, eyther they are not, or appeare not, when the nights are both darkest, and longest, and most uncomfortable. Thus do false-hearted Christians in the warm & lightsome times of free and incouraged profession, none shine more then they; In hard and gloomy seasons of

of reſtraint, and perſecution al their formal light is eyther loſt, or hid; Whereas true profeſſors eyther like the Sun ſhine ever alike, or, like the Starres ſhine faireſt in the froſtieſt nights: The light of this worme is for ſome ſhew but for no uſe: any light that is attēded with heate can impart it ſelfe to others, though with the expence of that ſubject wherein it is; this doth neither waſt it ſelfe, nor helpe others; I had rather never to have light, then not to have it alwayes; I had rather not to have light thē not to communicate it.

L.

L.

Vpon the shutting of one Eye.

WHen wee would take ayme, or see most exquisitely, we shut one eye: Thus must wee doe with the eyes of our Soule; When we would looke most accurately with the eye of Faith, we must shut the eye of Reason; else the visuall beames of these two apprehensions, will be crossing each other, & hinder our cleare discerning; Yea rather, let me pul out this right eye of Reason, then

then it ſhall offend me in the interruptions of mine happy Viſions of God.

LI.

Vpon a Spring-water.

HOw this Spring ſmoketh; whiles other greater chanels are frozē up; this water is living whiles they are dead; All experience teacheth us that Well-waters ariſing frō deep ſprings, are hotter in Winter, thē in Sūmer; the outward cold doth keepe in, and double their inward heat.

Such

Such is a true Chriſtian in the evill day; his life of Grace gets more vigor by oppoſition; he had not beene ſo gracious, if the times had beene better; I will not ſay he may thanke his enemies, but I muſt ſay hee may thanke God for his Enemies; O God, what can put out that heate, which is increaſed with cold? How happy ſhall I be, if I may grow ſo much more in Grace, as the World in Malice?

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LII.

Vpon Gnats in the Sun.

WHat a Cloud of Gnats is heere? Marke their motiõ; they doe nothing but play up and downe in the warme Sun, and ſing; and when they have done, ſit down and ſting the next hand, or face they can ſeize upon; See heere a perfect embleme of Idleneſſe & Detractiõ; how many do thus miſerably miſpend their good houres? Who after they have waſted the ſucceeding dayes in vaine, & meerely unprofitable paſtime, ſit down, and

& backbite their Neighbours. The Bee ſings too ſometimes, but ſhee workes alſo: and her worke is not more admirable, then uſefull; but theſe fooliſh Flyes doe nothing but play, and ſing to no purpoſe; even the buſieſt, & moſt active ſpirits moſt recreate, but to make a trade of ſport, is for none but lazie Wantons.

The Bee ſtings too; but it is when ſhe is provoked; theſe draw blood, unoffended, and ſting for their owne pleaſure; I would bee glad of ſome recreation but to enable, and ſweeten my worke; I would

would not but ſting ſometimes where is juſt cauſe of offence. But God bleſſe me frō thoſe men, which wil ever be eyther doing nothing, or ill.

LIII.

Vpon the ſight of Grapes.

MArke the difference of theſe Grapes; There you ſee a cluſter, whoſe grapes touch one another, well ripened; heere you ſee ſome ſtraglers, which grow almoſt ſolitarily, greene and hard. It is thus with us, Chriſtian ſociety helpeth our

our progresse; And, woe to him that is alone; Hee is well, that is the better for others; but he is happy by whom others are better.

LIIII.

Upon a Corne field overgrowne with Weeds.

HEere were a goodly field of Corne, if it were not over-laid with Weeds; I doe not like these reds, and blewes, and yellowes, amongst these plaine stalkes and eares: This beauty would doe well elsewhere; I had

had rather to see a plot lesse faire, and more yeilding; In this field I see a true picture of the world wherein there is more glory, thē true substance; Wherein the greater part carries it from the better; Wherein the native sonnes of the Earth out-strip the adventitious brood of grace; Wherein Parasites and unprofitable hang-byes doe both rob, and over-top their Masters; Both field and world grow alike, looke alike, and shal end alike; both are for the fire; whiles the homely and solid eares of despised Verrue shall be

be for the garners of immortality.

LV.

Vpon the ſight of Tulipaes & Marygolds, &c. in his Garden.

THeſe flowers are true Clients of the Sunne, how obſervant they are of his motion, and influence? At even, they ſhut up, as mourning for his departure, without whō they neyther can nor would flouriſh; in the morning, they welcome his riſing with a cheere-

full

ful openneſs, & at noone, are fully diſplay'd in a free acknowledgment of his bounty: thus doth the good heart unto God; When thou turnedſt away thy face I was troubled, ſaith the man after Gods owne heart; In thy preſence is life, yea the fulneſſe of joy: thus doth the carnall heart to the world; when that withdrawes his favour, he is dejected; & revives with a ſmile: All is in our choiſe; whatſoever is our Sun will thus carry us; O God, bee thou to mee, ſuch as thou art in thy ſelfe; thou ſhalt be merciſull in drawing mee; I

shall be happy in following thee.

LVI.

Vpõ the sound of a crackt Bell.

WHat an harsh sound doth this Bell make in every eare? The metall is good enough; it is the rift that makes it so unpleasingly jarring; How too like is this Bell to a scandalous and ill-lived Teacher? His calling is honourable; his noyse is heard farre enough; but the flawe (which is noted

ted in his life) marres his Doctrine; and offends those eares which else would take pleasure in his teaching; It is possible that such a one, even by that discordous noyse may ring in others into the Tryumphant Church of Heaven; but there is no remedy for himself but the fire; whether for his reforming, or judgment.

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LVII.

Vpon the sight of a blind Man.

HOw much am I bound to God that hath given me eyes to see this mans want of eyes: With what suspition and feare he walkes? How doth his hand and staffe examine his way? With what jealousie doth he receive every morsell, every draught, and yet meets with many a post, and stumbles at many a stone, & swallowes many a fly. To him the world is as if it were not, or as if it were

were all rubbes & snares, and downfalls; and if any man will lend him an hand, he must trust to his (how ever faithles) guide without all comfort save this, that he cannot see himselfe mis-carry. Many a one is thus Spiritually blind, and because he is so, discernes it not; and not discerning cõplaines not of so wofull a condition. The God of this world hath blinded the eyes of the Children of disobedience; they walke on in the wayes of death; & yeeld themselves over to the guidance of him who seekes for nothing but their precipitatiõ in-

to Hell. It is an addition to the miſery of this inward occæcation, that it is ever joyned with a ſecure confidence in them whoſe trade & ambition is to betray their Soules.

What ever become of theſe outward ſenſes which are common to me with the meaneſt, & moſt deſpicable creatures, O Lord, give mee not over to that ſpirituall darkneſs, which is incident to none but thoſe that live without thee, and muſt periſh eternally, becauſe they want thee.

LVIII.

LVIII.

Vpon a Beech-tree ful of Nuts.

HOw is this Tree o-verladen with maſt, this yeare? It was not ſo the laſt; neither will it (I warrant you) be ſo the next; It is the nature of theſe free Trees, ſo to powre out thēſelves into fruit, at once, that they ſeeme afterwards eyther ſterile, or niggardly: So have I ſeene pregnant wits (not diſcreetly governed) overſpend themſelves in ſome one maiſter-peece ſo laviſhly, that they have prooved

eyther barren, or poore and flat in all other subjects. True wisdome as it serves to gather due sap both for nourishment, & fructificatiõ, so it guides the seasonable and moderate bestowing of it in such manner, as that one season may not be a glutton, whiles others famish: I would be glad to attaine to that measure and temper that upon all occasions I might alwayes have enough, never too much.

LIX.

LIX.

Vpon the ſight of a peece of Mony under the Water.

I Should not wiſh ill to a Covetous man, if I ſhould wiſh al his Coine in the bottome of the River; No pavement could ſo well become that ſtreame; no ſight could better fit his greedy deſires; for there every peece would ſeeme double, every teſton would appeare a ſhilling, every Crown an Angell. It is the nature of that element to greaten appearing quantities; whiles

wee looke through the ayre upon that ſolid body, it can make no other repreſentations: Neither is it otherwiſe in ſpirituall eyes, and obiects; if wee looke with carnall eyes through the interpoſed meane of ſenſuality, every baſe & worthleſſe pleaſure will ſeeme a large contentment; if with weake eyes we ſhal look at ſmall and immateriall truthes aloofe off, in another elemẽt of apprehenſion, every parcell therof ſhal ſeeme maine, and eſſentiall; hence every knack of heraldry in the ſacred genealogies, & every ſcholaſtical quirke

in

in disquisitiõs of Divinity, are made matters of no lesse then life, and death to the Soule. It is a great improvement of true wisdome to be able to see things as they are, & to value them as they are seene. Let me labour for that power and stayednesse of judgment, that neither my senses may deceive my mind, nor the object may delude my sense.

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LX.

LX.

Vpon the first rumour of the earth-quake at Lime wherin a Wood was swallowed up with the fall of two Hills.

GOod LORD; how do wee know when wee are sure? If there were Man or Beast in that Wood, they seemed as safe as wee now are; they had nothing but Heaven above them, nothing but firme Earth below them; and yet in what a dreadfull pitfall were they instantly taken; There is no

no fence for Gods hand; A man would as soone have feared that heaven would fall upon him, as those hills? It is no pleasing our selves with the unlikelyhood of divine judgments. We have oft heard of Hills covered with Woods, but of Woods covered with Hills I thinke never till now; Those that planted or sowed those Woods, intended they should bee spent with fire, but, Loe, God meant they should be devoured with Earth;

Wee are wont to describe impossibilities by the meeting of Mountaines, and behold heere

two

two mountaines are met to ſwallow up a Valley; What a good God it is whoſe providence overrules, and diſpoſes of all theſe events?

Townes or Cities might as wel have beene thus buried, as a ſolitary Dale, or a ſhrubby Wood: Certainly the God that did this, would have the uſe of it reach further then the noyſe; this he did, to ſhow us what he could, what he might doe; If our hearts doe not quake and rend at the acknowledgement of his infinite Power, and feare of his terrible judgments as well as that

Earth

Earth did, wee must exspect to bee made warnings, that would take none.

LXI.

Vpon the sight of a Dormouse.

AT how easie a rate doe these Creatures live that are fed with rest; So the Beare and the Hedg-hog (they say) spend their whole winter in sleepe, and rise up fatter then they lay downe; How oft have I envyed the thriving drowsinesse of

of theſe Beaſts; When the toyle of thoughts hath bereaved me of but one houres ſleepe, and left me languiſhing to a new taske; and yet, when I have wel digeſted the compariſon of both theſe conditions, I muſt needs ſay, I had rather waſte with worke, then batten with eaſe; and would rather chooſe a life profitably painfull, then uſeleſly dull and delicate. I cannot tell whether I ſhould ſay thoſe Creatures live which doth nothing; ſince wee are wont ever to notifie life by motion; Sure I am their life is not vital; For me,

me, Let me rather complaine of a mind that will not let me be idle, then of a body that will not let me worke.

LXII.

Vpon Bees fighting.

WHat a pitty it is to see these profitable, industrious Creatures fall so furiously upon each other, and thus sting and kill each other, in the very mouth of the Hive; I could like well to see the Bees doe this execution upon Wespes and Droanes, enemies to

to their common stocke, this savours but of Justice; But to see them fall foule upon those of their owne wing, it cannot but trouble their owner, who must needs be an equall leeser by the victory of eyther; There is no more perfect resemblance of a Common-wealth, whether civill, or sacred, then in an Hive: The Bees are painfull and honest Compatriots, labouring to bring Waxe and Hony to the maintenance of the publike state; The Wasps and Droanes are unprofitable and harmefull Hangbyes, which live upon

upõ the ſpoyle of others labours; whether as common Barattors, or ſtrong Theeves, or bold Paraſites, they do nothing but robbe their Neighbours. It is an happy ſight when theſe feele the dint of Juſtice, and are cut off from doing further miſchiefe, But to ſee well-affected and beneficiall Subjects undoe themſelves with duells, whether of Law, or Sword; to ſee good Chriſtians of the ſame profeſſiõ, ſhedding each others blood, upon quarrels of Religion, is no other then a ſad & hateful ſpectacle; and ſo much the more, by how much

wee

we have more meanes of reason and Grace to compose our differences, and correct our offensive contentiousnesse; O God who art at once the Lord of Hosts, and Prince of Peace, give us warre with spirituall wickednes, & Peace with our Brethren.

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LXIII.

LXIII.

Vpon Waſpes falling into a Glaſſe.

SEe you that narrow-mouthed glaſſe, which is ſet neare to the Hive, marke how buſily the Waſpes reſort to it; being drawn thither by the ſmel of that ſweet liquor wherewith it is bayted; ſee how eagerly they creepe into the mouth of it; and fall downe ſuddainely from that ſlippery ſteepneſſe, into that watery trap, from which they can never riſe; there after ſome vaine labour, and wearineſſe, they drowne,

drowne and dye; You do not see any of the Bees look that way; they passe directly to their Hive, without any notice taken of such a pleasing Bait, Idle and ill disposed persons are drawne away with every temptation, they have both leisure and will to entertaine every sweet allurement to sin, and wantonly prosecute their owne wicked lusts till they fall into irrecoverable damnation; Whereas the diligent and laborious Christian that followes hard and conscionably the workes of an honest calling, is free from the danger of

theſe deadly intiſements & layes up hony of comfort againſt the Winter of evill; Happy is that man who can ſee and injoy the ſucceſſe of his labour; but, how ever, this we are ſure of; if our labour cannot purchaſe the good wee would have, it ſhall prevent the evill wee would avoyd.

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LXIIII.

LXIIII.

Vpon a spring in a Wilde Forrest.

LOe heere the true patterne of Bounty; What cleare chrystall streames are heere, and how liberally doe they gush forth and hasten downe, with a pleasing murmur, into the Valley; Yet you see neither Man nor Beast, that takes part of that wholsome and pure water; It is enough, that those may dip who will: the refusall of others doth no whit abate of this proffered plenty; Thus bountifull Housekeepers

keepers hold on their set ordinary provision, whether they have guests or no; Thus conscionable Preachers powre out the living Waters of wholsome Doctrine, whether their Hearers partake of those blessed meanes of Salvation, or neglect their holy indeavours, Let it bee our comfort that wee have beene no niggards of these celestial streames, let the world give an account of the improvement.

LXV.
Upon the sight of an Owle in the twilight.

WHat a strange Melancholicke life doth this Creature lead; to hide her head, all the day long, in an Ivy-bush, and at night, when all other Birds are at rest, to flye abroad, and vent her harsh notes; I know not why the ancients have sacted this Bird to wisedome, except it bee for her safe closenesse, & singular perspicacity; that when other domesticall and ayrie Creatures are blind,

blind, ſhe onely hath inward light to diſcerne the leaſt obje&ts for her owne advantage; Surely thus much wit they have taught us in her; that he is the wiſeſt man, that would have leaſt to doe with the multitude; that no life is ſo ſafe as the obſcure; that retiredneſs, if it have leſſe comfort, yet leſſe danger & vexation; Laſtly, that hee is truly wiſe who ſees by a light of his owne, when the reſt of the world ſit in an ignorant and confuſed darkeneſſe, unable to apprehend any truth, ſave by the helps of an outward illumination.

Had this Fowle comne forth in the day time, how had all the little Birds flock't wondring about her, to ſee her uncouth viſage, to heare her untuned notes; ſhe likes her eſtate never the worſe, but pleaſeth her ſelfe in her owne quiet reſervedneſſe; It is not for a wiſe man to bee much affected with the cenſures of the rude and unskilfull vulgar but to hold faſt unto his owne well-choſen and well-fixed reſolutions; Every foole knowes what is wont to bee done; but what is beſt to be done, is known only to the wiſe.

LXVI.

LXVI.

Vpon an arme benummed.

HOw benummed and (for the time) senseleſſe is this arme of mine become, only with too long leaning upon it?

Whiles I uſed it to other ſervices, it fayled me not; now that I have reſted upon it, I finde cauſe to complaine; It is no truſting to an arme of fleſh; On whatſoever occaſion we put our confidence therein, this relyance will bee ſure to

end in paine, and diſappointment; O GOD thine arme is ſtrong and mighty; all thy Creatures reſt themſelves upon that, and are comfortably ſuſtained; Oh that wee were not more capable of diſtruſt, then thine omnipotent hand is of weakneſſe & ſubduction.

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LXVII.

Vpon the ſparkes flying upward.

IT is a feeling compariſon (that of JOB) of man borne to labour, as the ſparkes to flye upward; That motion of theirs is no other then naturall; Neyther is is otherwiſe for man to labour; his mind is created active, and apt to ſome or other ratiocination; his joynts all ſtirring; his nerves made for helps of moving; and his occaſions of living call him forth to action: So

as an idle man doth not more want Grace, then degenerate from nature. Indeed, at the firſt kindling of the fire, ſome ſparkes are wont, by the impulſiō of the bellowes, to flie forward, or ſideward; and even ſo, in our firſt Age, youthly vanity may move us to irregular courſes; but when thoſe firſt violences are overcome; and we have attained to a ſetledneſs of diſpoſition, our ſparkes flye up, our life is labour; And why ſhould wee not doe that which we are made for? Why ſhould not God rather grudge us our being, thē we grudge him

him our worke? It is no thanke to us that wee labour out of neceſſity, out of my obedience to thee, O God I deſire ever to bee imployed; I ſhall never have comfort in my toyle, if it be rather a purveyance for my ſelfe, then a Sacrifice to thee.

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LXVIII.

Vpon the sight of a Raven.

I Cannot see that Bird but I must needs thinke of ELIAH; and wonder no lesse at the miracle of his faith then of his provision; It was a strong beleefe that carryed him into a desolate retirednes to expect food from Ravens; This fowle, wee know, is ravenous; all is too little that he can forage for himselfe; and the Prophets reason must needs suggest to him, that in a dry barren Desart

ſart bread and fleſh muſt be great dainties; yet he goes aſide to expect victuals from that purveyance; Hee knew this Fowle to bee no leſſe greedy, then uncleane; Uncleane, as in Law, ſo in the nature of his feed; What is his ordinary prey but loathſome carrion? Yet ſince God had appointed him this Cator, he ſtands not upon the nice points of a faſtidious ſqueamiſhneſs, but confidenly depends upon that uncouth proviſion; And accordingly, thoſe unlikely purveyours bring him bread and fleſh in the Morning, and bread

bread and flesh in the Evening.

Not one of those hungry Ravens could swallow one morsell of those viands, which were sent by them, to a better mouth; The River of Cherith sooner fayled him, then the tender of their Service. No doubt, ELIAHS stomacke was often up before that his incurious dyet came; When expecting frō the mouth of his Cave, out of what Coast of Heavē these his Servitors might bee descryed, upon the sight of them, hee magnified, with a thankefull heart, the wonderfull good-

goodneſſe and truth of his God; and was nouriſhed more with his faith, then with his food : O God, how infinite is thy providence, wiſedome, power ? We creatures are not what we are, but what thou wilt have us ; when thy turne is to be ſerved, wee have none of our owne ; Give mee but faith, and doe what thou wilt.

LXIX.

LXIX.

Vpon a Worme.

IT was an homely expreſſion which GOD makes of the ſtate of his Church, Feare not, thou Worme JACOB; Every foot is ready to tread on this deſpiſed Creature; Whiles it keepes it ſelfe in that cold obſcure Cell of the earth (wherein it was hidden) it lay ſafe, becauſe it was ſecret, but now that it hath put it ſelfe forth of that cloſe Cave, and hath preſented it ſelfe to the light of the Sunne, to the eye of Paſſengers; how

how is it vexed with the ſcorching beames, and wrings up and downe, in an helpleſſe perplexity; not finding where to ſhrowd it ſelfe; how obnoxious is it to the foules of the ayre, to the feet of men and beaſts? He that made this creature ſuch, and calls his Church ſo, well knew the anſwerablenes of their conditiõ: How doth the world over-looke, and contemne that little flocke whoſe beſt gard hath ever bin ſecrecy? And if ever that deſpicable number have dared to ſhew it ſelf, how hath it beene ſcorched, and trampled upon, and in-

intertained with all variety of persecution? O Saviour, thy Spouse fares no otherwise then thy selfe; to match her fully, thou hast said of thy self, I am a Worme and no man; Such thou wert in thine humbled estate, here on earth; such thou wouldest be; But, as it is a true word that hee who made the Angels in heavē, made also the wormes on earth; so it is no lesse true, that he who made himselfe and his Church Wormes upon Earth, hath raised our nature in his person above the Angels, and our person in his Church to little

lesse

leſs then Angels; It matters not how wee fare in this vally of tears, whiles wee are ſure of that infinite amends of Glory above.

LXX.

Vpō the putting on of his Cloathes.

WHat a poore thing were Man, if hee were not beholden to other Creatures? The Earth affords him flaxe for his linnen, bread for his belly, the Beaſts his ordinary cloathes, the Silk-worme his bravery; the

the backe and bowels of the earth his metals and fuell; the Fishes, Fowles, Beasts his nourishment; His wit indeed workes upon all these, to improve them to his owne advantage; but they must yield him materials, else he subsists not, And yet we fooles are proud of our selves, yea proud of the cast suits of the very basest Creatures: There is not one of them that have so much need of us; They would injoy themselves the more, if Man were not; Oh GOD, the more wee are sensible of our owne indigence, the more let us

us wonder at thine al-ſufficiency in thy ſelf; and long for that happy condition, wherein thou (which art al perfection) ſhalt be all in all to us.

LXXI.

Vpon the ſight of a great Library.

WHat a world of wit is here pack't up together? I know not whether this ſight doth more diſmay, or comfort me; it diſmayes me to thinke, that heere is ſo much that I cannot know;

know; It comforts mee, to thinke that this variety yeelds so good helps to know what I should; There is no truer word then that of SALOMON, There is no end of making many Bookes; this sight verifies it; There is no end; indeed, it were pitty there should. GOD hath given to Man a busie Soule; the agitation whereof cannot but through time and experience worke out many hidden truthes; to suppresse these would bee no other then injurious to Mankind; whose minds like unto so many candles, should bee kind-

led

led by each other : The thoughts of our deliberation are moſt accurat, theſe wee vent into our Papers; What an happineſſe is it, that, without all offence of Necromancy, I may here call up any of the ancient Worthies of learning, whether humane, or divine, and conferre with them of all my doubts? That I can at pleaſure ſummon whole Synodes of Reverend Fathers, and acute Doctors from all the Coaſts of the Earth, to give their well-ſtudyed judgements in all points of queſtion which I propoſe? Neyther can I caſt

cast my eye casually upon any of these silent Maisters, but I must learne somewhat: It is a wantonnesse to complaine of choyse;

No Law bindes us to read all; but the more we can take in, and digest, the better-liking must the minds needs bee; Blessed be God that hath set up so many cleare Lamps in his Church.

Now, none but the wilfully blind can plead darknesse; And blessed be the memory of those his faithful Servants, that have left their bloud, their spirits, their lives in these precious papers;

and

& have willingly wasted themselves into these during Monuments, to give light unto others.

LXXII.

Upon the red Crosse on a doore.

OH signe fearefully significant; this sickenesse is a Crosse indeed, and that a bloody one; both the forme and the colour import Death; The Israelites doores whose lintells were besprinkled with blood, were passed over by the destroying Angell; here, the

the deſtroying Angell hath ſmitten, and hath left this marke of his deadly blow; Wee are wont to fight cheerefully under this Enſigne abroad, and be victorious; Why ſhould we tremble at it at home? Oh God, there thou fighteſt for us, here againſt us; Under that we have fought for thee, but under this (becauſe our ſinnes have fought againſt thee) wee are fought againſt by thy judgements.

Yet Lord, it is thy Croſſe; though an heavy one; It is ours by merit, thine by impoſition; O Lord, ſanctifie thine af-

affliction, and remove thy vengeance.

LXXIII.

Vpon the change of Weather.

I Know not whether it be worſe, that the Heaven looke upon us alwayes with one face, or ever varying; for as continuall change of Weather cauſes uncertainty of health, ſo a permanent ſetledneſſe of one ſeaſon, cauſeth a certainty of diſtẽper; perpetuall moyſture diſſolves us, perpetuall heate

evaporates or inflames us; cold stupifies us; drought obstructs and withers us; Neither is it otherwise in the state of the minde; if our thoughts should bee alwaies volatile, changing, inconstant, wee should never attaine to any good habit of the soule, whether in matter of judgement, or disposition; but if they should be alwayes fixed, we should run into the danger of some desperate extremity; to be ever thinking, would make us mad; to be ever thinking of our crosses, or sinnes, would make us hartlesly dejected;

jected; to bee ever thinking of Pleasures and Cõtentments, would melt us into a loose wãtonnes; to be ever doubting, and fearing were an Hellish servitude; to bee ever bold, and confident, were a dangerous presumption, but the interchanges of these in a due moderation, keepe the Soule in health; O God, howsoever these Variations be necessary for my Spirituall condition; Let me have no weather but Sunne-shine from thee; Do thou lift up the light of thy countenance upon mee, and stablish mee ever with thy free spirit.

LXXIIII.

Vpon the sight of a Marriage.

WHat a comfortable and feeling resemblance is here of CHRIST, and his Church: I regard not the persons, I regard the institution: Neyther the Husband, nor the Wife are now any more their owne: they have eyther of them given over thē-selves, to other: not onely the Wife, which is the weaker vessell, hath yeilded

yeilded over her ſelfe to the ſtronger protection, and participation of an abler head; but the Huſband hath reſigned his right in himſelfe over to his feebler conſort; So as now, her weakeneſſe is his; his ſtrength is hers; Yea their very fleſh hath altered property; hers is his, his is hers; Yea their very ſoule and ſpirit may no more bee ſevered in reſpect of mutuall affection, then from their owne ſeverall bodyes: It is thus, O Saviour, with thee and thy Church: Wee are not our owne, but thine; who haſt married us to

thy ſelfe in truth and righteouſneſs; What powers, what indowments have wee but from, and in thee? And as our holy boldneſſe dares intereſſe our ſelves in thy graces, ſo thy wonderfully-compaſſionate mercy vouchſaves to intereſſe thy ſelf in our infirmities; thy poore Church ſuffers on Earth, thou feeleſt in Heaven; and as complaining of our ſtripes canſt ſay, *Why perſecuteſt thou mee?*

Thou againe art not ſo thine owne, as that thou art not alſo ours; thy Sufferings, thy Merits, thy Obedience, thy Life, Death,

Death, Resurrection, Ascension, Intercession, Glory; yea thy blessed Humanity, yea thy glorious Deity, by vertue of our right, of our Union, are so ours, as that wee would not give our part in thee for ten thousand Worlds.

Oh gracious Saviour, as thou cāst not but love and cherish this poore and unworthy Soule of mine, which thou hast mercifully espoused to thy selfe; so give mee Grace to honour and obey thee, and forsaking all the base and sinfull rivality of the World, to hold me onely unto thee

whiles I live heere, that I may perfectly enjoy thee hereafter.

LXXV.

Vpō the sight of a Snake.

I Know not what horror we finde in our selves at the sight of a Serpent; Other creatures are more loathsome, and some no lesse deadly then it; yet, there is none, at which our bloud riseth so much, as at this; Whence should this be, but out of an instinct of our old enmity? Wee were

were ſtung in Paradiſe, & cannot but feele it: But here is our weakneſſe; It was not the body of the Serpent that could have hurt us, without the ſuggeſtion of ſinne; and yet we love the ſinne whiles wee hate the Serpent; Every day are wee wounded with the ſting of that old Serpent, and complaine not; and ſo much more deadly is that ſting by how much it is leſſe felt: There is a ſting of guilt, and there is a ſting of remorſe; there is mortall venome in the firſt, whereof we are the leaſt ſenſible; there is leſs danger in the ſecond;

The Iſraelites found thē-ſelves ſtung by thoſe fie-ry Serpents in the De-ſart; and the ſenſe of their paine ſent them to ſeeke for Cure; The World is our Deſart; and as the ſting of Death is ſinne; ſo the ſting of Sinne is Death; I doe not more wiſh to finde eaſe then paine; If I complaine e-nough, I cannot faile of cure; O thou, which art the true brazen Serpent, lifted up in this wilder-neſſe, raiſe up mine eyes to thee, and faſten them upō thee; thy mercy ſhall make my ſoule whole, my wound ſoveraigne.

LXXVI.

Vpon the Ruines of an Abby.

IT is not soe easie to so what it was that built up these walls, as what it was, that pull'd them down; even the wickednesse of the Possessours;

Every stone hath a tongue to accuse the Superstition, Hypocrisie, Idlenesse, Luxury of the late owners.

Me thinkes I see it written all along, in Capitall letters upō these heapes; *A fruitfull Land maketh hee barren for the iniquity of them that dwell therein;*

Perhaps

Perhaps there wãted not some Sacrilege in the Demolishers; in all the carriage of these businesses, there was a just hand, that knew how to make an wholsome and profitable use of mutuall sins; Full little did the Builders, or the in-dwellers think that this costly and warme fabrick should so soone end violently in a desolate rubbish: It is not for us to be high-minded but to feare; No Roofe is so high, no wal so strong, as that sinne cannot level it with the Dust; Were any pile so close that it could keepe out ayre, yet it could not keepe out judg-

judgment where ſin hath beene fore-admitted;

In vaine ſhall we promiſe ſtability to thoſe Houſes which wee have made witneſſes of, & acceſſaries to our ſhameful uncleanneſſes, The firmneſſe of any building is, not ſo much in the matter, as in the owner; Happy is that Cottage that hath an honeſt maiſter, and wo be to that Palace that is viciouſly inhabited.

LXXVII.

LXXVII.

Upon the discharging of a Peece.

GOod LORD, how witty men are to kill one another? What fine devises they have found out to murder a far off? to slay many at once; and so to fetch off lives; that whiles a whole Lane is made of Carcasses with one blow, no body knowes who hurt him? And what honour do we place in slaughter? Those armes, wherein we pride our selves, are such, as which, wee, or our Ancestors have purchased with

with blood? The Monuments of our Glory, are the ſpoyles of a ſubdu'd and ſlain enemy; Where contrarily all the titles of God ſound of Mercy, and gracious reſpects to Man: God the Father is the maker and preſerver of men; God the Sonne is the Saviour of Mankind; God the Holy Ghoſt ſtyles himſelfe the Comforter: Alas, whoſe image doe wee beare in this diſpoſition, but his whoſe true title is the Deſtroyer? It is eaſie to take away the life, it is not eaſie to give it; Give mee the man that can deviſe how to ſave Troupes of

of men from killing, his name ſhal have roome in my Calender; There is more true honour in a civick garlād, for the preſerving of one ſubject, then in a Lawrell, for the victory of many *enemies*; Oh God, there are enow that bend their thoughts to vndoe what thou haſt made, enable thou mee to beſtow my indeavors in reprieving, or reſcuing that which might other wiſe periſh; O thou who art our cōmon Saviour, make thou mee both ambitious and able to helpe to ſave ſome other beſides my ſelfe.

LXXVIII.

Vpon the tolling of a paſſing-Bell.

HOw doleful and heavy is this ſummons of Death? This ſound is not for our eares, but for our hearts; it calls us not onely to our prayers, but to our preparation; To our Prayers for the departing Soule; to our preparation for our own departing; We have never ſo much need of Prayers, as in our laſt Combat, then is our great Adverſary moſt eager: then are wee the weakeſt, then nature is ſo

so over-laboured, that it gives us not leisure to make use of gracious motions: There is no preparation so necessary as for this Conflict: all our life is little enough to make ready for our last houre: What am I better then my Neighbours? How oft hath this Bell reported to me the farewell of many more strong & vigorous bodies thē my owne: of many more cheerefull and lively spirits? And now what doth it, but call mee to the thought of my parting? Here is no abiding for me: I must away too: Oh thou that art the GOD of

of comfort, helpe thy poore Servant that is now ſtruggling with his laſt enemie; His ſad friends ſtand gazing upon him, and weeping over him, but they cannot ſuccour him; needs muſt they leave him to do this great work alone: none but thou to whom belong the iſſues of death, canſt relieve his diſtreſſed & over-matched Soule; And for me, let no man dye without mee, as I dye dayly, ſo teach mee to dye once; acquaint mee before hand with that Meſſenger, which I muſt truſt too; Oh teach mee ſo to number

my

my dayes, that I may apply my heart to true wisdome.

LXXIX.

Vpon a defamation dispersed.

WEre I the first or the best that ever was slandered, perhaps it would bee somewhat difficult to command my selfe patience, Griefe is wont to be abated eyther by partners, or precedents; the want, whereof dejects us beyond measure, as men singled out for patternes of

of misery: Now, whiles I finde this the common condition of all that ever have beene reputed vertuous, why am I troubled with the whisperings of false tongues? O GOD, * the Divell slandered thee in Paradise; O Saviour, men slandered thee on earth more then men or devils can reproach mee; Thou art the best, as thou art the best, that ever was smitten by a lying and venomous tongue: It is too much favour that is done mee by malicious lippes, that they conforme mee to thy sufferings; I could not bee so happie

* *Si Christus Judam passus est, cur non ego patiar Birrhichionem? Dial. de S. Martino Sever. Sulpit.*

happie if they were not so spightfull; Oh thou glorious patterne of reproached innocence, if I may not dye for thee, yet let mee thus bleed with thee.

LXXX.

Vpon a ring of Bels.

WHiles every Bell keepes due time and order, what a sweet and harmonious found they make? Al the neighbour Villages are cheared with that common Musick; but when once they jarre, and checke ead

each other; either jangling together, or striking prepostrously, how harsh and unpleasing is that noyse; So that as we testifie our publike rejoycing by an orderly & well-tuned peale; So when wee would signifie that the Towne is on fire we ring confusedly.

It is thus in Church and Common-wealth; when every one knowes and keepes their due rancks, there is a melodious consort of Peace and contentment; but when distances, and proportions of respects are not mutually observed; when eyther States or persons will

will bee clashing with each other, the discord is grievous and extremely prejudiciall; such confusion eyther notifieth a fire already kindled, or portendeth it; Popular States may ring the chāges with safety; but the Monarchical governmēt requires a constant and regular course of the set degrees of rule and inferiority, which cannot be violated without a sensible discontentment, and danger; For me, I doe so love the peace of the Church and State, that I cannot but, with the charitable Apostle, say, *Would to God they were cut off*

off that trouble them; and shall ever wish eyther no jarres, or no clappers.

LXXXI.

Vpon the sight of a full Table at a Feast.

WHat great Variety is here, of flesh, of fish, of both, of neither; as if both Nature & Art did strive to pamper us; Yet mee thinkes, enough is better then al this, Excesse is but a burden, as to the provider, so to the Guest; It pitties and greeves mee to thinke

what toyle, what charge hath gone to the gathering of all these dayntics together, what paine so many poore Creatures have beene put to in dying for a needlesse Sacrifice to the Belly; what a Penance must bee done by every accumbent, in sitting out the passage through all these dishes; what a taske the stomack must bee put to in the concoction of so many mixtures; I am not so austerely scrupulous as to deny the lawfulnes of these abundant provisions, upon just occasions; I find my Savior himself more thē once at a feast;

this

this is recorded as well as his one long Fast: Doubtleſs our bountiful GOD hath given us his Creatures, not for neceſſity onely, but for pleaſure: but theſe exceedings would bee both rare and moderate; & when they muſt be, require no leſſe patience then temperance.

Might I have my option, O God, give mee rather a little with peace and love; He whoſe proviſion for every day, was thirty meaſures of fine flower, and threeſcore meaſures of meale, thirty Oxen, an hundred Sheep beſides Veniſon, and

Fowle, yet can pray; *Give mee the Bread of sufficiency*; Let me have no perpetuall Feast but a good Conscience; & frō these great preparations (for the health both of Soule and body) let mee rise rather hungry, then surcharged.

LXXXII.

Vpō the hearing of a Lute well play'd on.

THere may bee (for ought wee know) infinite inventions of Art, the possibility whereof wee should hardly ever be.

beleeve, if they were fore reported to us; Had we lived in some rude, and remote part of the World, and should have beene told that it is possible onely by an hollow peece of Wood, and the guts of Beasts, stirred by the fingers of men, to make so sweet & melodious a noyse; we should have thought it utterly incredible; yet now that wee see and here it ordinarily done, wee make it no wonder; It is no marvell, if wee cannot fore-imagine, what kind, and meanes of harmony GOD will have used by his Saints, and Angels in

Heaven; when these poore matters seeme so strange to our conceits, which yet our very senses are convinced of; Oh GOD, thou knowest infinite wayes to glorifie thy selfe by thy Creatures, which do farre transcend our weake, and finite capacities; Let me wonder at thy wisdome & power, and be more awfull in my adorations, then curious in my inquiries.

LXXXIII.

LXXXIII.

Vpon the sight and noyse of a Peacocke.

I See there are many kindes of Hypocrites; Of all Birds this makes the fayrest show, and the worst noyse; So as this is an Hypocrite to the eye: There are others, as the Black-bird, that lookes foule and sooty, but sings well; this is an Hypocrite to the Eare: There are others that please us well, both in their shew, and voice, but are crosse in their carriage and condition, as the Popingay, whose co-

lours are beautifull, and noyse delightfull; yet is apt to doe mischiefe in scratching & byting any hand that comes neare it? These are Hypocrites both to the eye, and eare; Yet there is a degree further (beyond the example of all brute Creatures) of them, whose shew, whose words, whose actions are faire, but their hearts are foule, and abhominable;

No outward beautie can make the Hypocrite other then odious:

For me, let my profession agree with my words, my words with my actions, my actions with

with my heart; and let al of them be approoved of the God of truth.

LXXXIIII.

Vpon a penitent Malefactor.

I Know not whether I ſhould more admire the Wiſdome or the Mercy of GOD in his proceedings with Men; Had not this man ſinned thus notoriouſly, he had never beene thus happy; whiles his courſes were faire, and civill, yet hee

was graceleſſe; now his miſcarriage hath drawne him into a juſt affliction; his affliction hath humbled him; God hath take this advantage of his humiliation, for his converſion: Had not one foot ſlipt into the mouth of Hell, he had never beene in this forwardneſſe to Heaven.

There is no man ſo weake, or fooliſh, as that he hath not ſtrength or wit enough to ſin; or to make ill uſe of his ſinne; It is onely the goodneſſe of an infinite GOD, that can make our ſinne good to us, though evill in it ſelfe; Oh God, it is no thanke

thanke to our selves, or to our sinnes, that wee are bettered with evill; the Worke is thine, let thine bee the Glory.

LXXXV.

Upon the sight of a Lilly.

THis must needs bee a goodly Flower that our Saviour hath singled out to compare with SALOMON, and that not in his ordinary dresse, but in all his royalty. Surely the earth had never so glorious a King as hee, Nature yeilded nothing

thing that might set forth royall magnificence, that hee wanted; yet he that made both SALOMON and this Flower, sayes, that SALOMON in all his royaltie was not clad like it; What a poore thing is this earthly bravery that is so easily overmatched? How ill judges are we of outward beauties that contemne these goodly Plants, which their Creator thus magnifies, and admire those base metals, which hee (in cõparison hereof) contemnes: If it be their transitorines that embaseth them; what are wee? *All flesh is Grasse, and all the*

glory

glory of man as the flower of Grasse: As wee cannot be so brave, so we cannot be more permanent; O God let it be my ambition to walke with thee hereafter in white; Could I put on a robe of starres here, with proud *Herod*, that glittering garment could not keepe me from Lice, or Wormes; Might I sit on a Throne of Gold; within an house of Ivory I see I should not compare with this Flower, I might be as transitory, I should not be so beautifull; what matters it whether I go for a flower, or a weed, heere; whethersoever, I must wither:

Oh

Oh thou which art greater then SALOMON do thou cloath me with thy perfect righteousnesse, so shall I flourish for ever in the Courts of the House of my God.

LXXXVI.

Vpō the sight of a Coffin stucke with flowers.

TOo faire appearance is never free from just suspition; whiles here was nothing but meere Wood, no Flower was to be seen here, now that this Wood is lined with an unsavoury Corps, it is adorned

adorned with this ſweet variety; the firre where-of that Coffin is made, yeilds a naturall redolence alone; now that it is ſtuffed thus noyſomely, all helpes are too little to countervaile that ſent of corruption; Neyther is it otherwiſe in the living.

Perpetual uſe of ſtrong perfumes argues a guiltineſſe of ſome unpleaſing ſavour. The caſe is the ſame ſpiritually; an over-glorious outſide of Profeſſion implyes ſome inward filthines that would faine eſcape notice; Our uncomely parts have more comelineſs put on;

Too

Too much ornament imports extreme deformity, For mee, let my ſhew bee moderate, ſo ſhall I neyther deceive applauſe nor merit too deepe cenſure.

LXXXVII.

Vpon the the view of the World.

IT is a good thing to ſee this materiall World; but it is a better thing to thinke of the intelligible World; this thought is the ſight of the Soule, whereby it diſcerneth things, like it ſelfe, Spiri-

tuall,

tuall, and Immortall; which are so much beyond the worth of these sensible objects, as a Spirit is beyond a body, a pure substance beyond a corruptible, an infinite God above a finite Creature; O God, how great a word is that which the Psalmist sayes of thee, that thou abasest thy self to behold the things both in Heaven, and Earth?

It is our glory to looke up even to the meanest peece of Heaven; It is an abasement to thine incomprehensible Majesty to looke downe upon the best of Heaven; Oh, what a transcendēt Glo-

ry

ry must that needs bee, that is abased to behold the things of Heaven? What an happinesse shall it be to mee, that mine eyes shall bee exalted to see thee; who art humbled to see the place, and state of my blessednesse: Yea, those very Angels that see thy face, are so resplendently glorious, that wee could not overlive the sight of one of their faces, who are faine to hide their faces from the sight of thine; How many millions of them attend thy Throne above, & thy Footstool below, in the ministration to thy Saints? It is that thine invisible

visible world, the Communion wherewith can make mee truly blessed; O God, if my body have fellowship here amongst Beasts, of whose earthly substance it participates; Let my Soule be united to thee, the God of Spirits; and bee raised up to injoy the insensible society of thy blessed Angels; Acquaint mee beforehand with those Citizens and affaires of thine Heaven; and make me no stranger to my future Glory.

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LXXXVIII.

LXXXVIII.

Vpon the stinging of a Waspe.

HOw small things may annoy the greatest? even a Mouse troubles an Elephant, a Gnat a Lion; a very Flea may disquiet a Gyant; What weapon can be nearer to nothing then the sting of this Waspe; Yet what a painfull wound hath it given mee; that scarce-visible point how it envenomes, and rankles, and swels up the flesh? The tendernes of the part addes much to the griefe.

And if I be thus vexed with

with the touch of an angry Flye, Lord, how shall I be able to indure the sting of a tormenting Conscience? As that part is both most active, and most sensible, so that wound which it receives from it selfe, is most intolerably greevous; there were more ease in a nest of Hornets, then under this one torture. O GOD, howsoever I speed abroad, give mee Peace at home; and what ever my flesh suffer, keepe my Soule free.

Thus pained, wherein do I find ease but in laying hony to the part infected

fected? That Medicine only abates the anguish; How neere hath Nature placed the remedy to the offence? Whesoever my heart is stung with the remorse for sinne, onely thy sweet and precious merits, O blessed Saviour, can mitigate, and heale the wound; they have vertue to cure mee, give mee grace to apply them; that soveraigne receit shal make my paine happy; I shall thus applaud my griefe, It is good for mee that I was thus afflicted.

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LXXXIX.

Vpon the Araignment of a Felon.

WIth what terrour doth this Malefactor stand at that Barre? his hand trembles, whiles it is lift up for his tryall; his very lips quake, whiles he saith, Not guilty; his countenance condemnes him before the Judge; and his feare is ready to execute him before his Hang-man: Yet this Judge is but a weake man, that must, soone after, dye himselfe; that sentence of Death, which

which he can pronounce, is already passed by Nature upon the most innocent; that act of death, which the Law inflicteth by him, is but momentany; who knowes whether himselfe shall not dye more painefully? O God, with what horror shall the guilty soule stand before thy dreadful Tribunall in the day of the great Assizes of the World? Whiles there is the presence of an infinite Majesty to daunt him; a fierce and clamorous Conscience to give in evidence against him; Legions of ugly, and terrible Divels wayting

to

to seize upon him; a gulfe of unquenchable Fire ready to receive him; whiles the Glory of the Judge is no lesse confounding, then the cruelty of the Tormenters; Where the sentence is unavoydable and the execution Everlasting: Why doe not these terrors of thee, my God, make me wise to hold a privy Sessions upon my Soule, and actions, that being acquited by my owne heart, I may not be condemned by thee; and being judged by my selfe, I may not bee condemned with the World?

XC.
Upon the Crowing of a Cocke.

HOw harshly did this note sound in the eare of PETER, yea pearced his very heart; Many a time had he heard this bird, and was no whit moved with the noyse; now, there was a Bird in his bosome that crowed lowder then this; Whose shrill accent conjoyned with this, astonished the guilty Disciple.

The wearie labourer when he is awakened from his sweet sleepe by this naturall Clocke of the

the Houſhold, is not ſo angry at this troubleſom Bird, nor ſo vexed at the hearing of that unſeaſonable ſound, as PETER was, when this Fowle awakened his ſleeping Conſcience, and called him to a timely repentance; This Cocke did but crow like others; neither made or knew any difference of this tone, and the reſt; there was a divine hand that ordered this Mornings note to be a Summons of Penitence; Hee that fore-told it, had fore-appointed it: that Bird could not but crow then; and all the noyſe in the High-

Prieſts Hall could not keepe that ſound from PETERS eare: But, Oh SAVIOVR, couldſt thou finde leaſure, when thou ſtoodſt at the Barre of that unjuſt, and cruell Judgement, amidſt all that bloudy rabble of Enemies, in the ſenſe of all their furie, and the expectation of thine owne Death, to liſten unto this Monitor of *Peters* Repentance; and upon the hearing of it, to caſt back thine eyes upon thy Denying, Curſing, Abjuring Diſciple? O Mercy without meaſure; and beyond all the poſſibility of our Admiration; to neglect thy

thy selfe for a sinner, to attend the repentance of one, when thou wert about to lay downe thy life for all.

O God, thou art still equally mercifull. Every Elect Soule is no lesse deare unto thee: Let the sound of thy faithfull monitors smite my eares: and let the beames of thy merciful eyes wound my heart, so as I may goe forth and weepe bitterly

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XCI.

Vpon the varietie of thoughts.

WHen I bethinke my ſelfe how Eternity depends upon this moment of life, I wonder how I can think of any thing but heaven: but, when I ſee the diſtractiõs of my thoughts, and the aberrations of my life, I wonder how I can bee ſo bewitched, as (whiles I beleeve an Heaven) ſo to forget it. All that I can doe, is to bee angry at my owne vanity.

vanity. My thoughts would not bee so many, if they were all right; there are tenne thousand by-wayes for one direct; As there is but one Heaven, so there is but one way to it; that living Way, wherein I walke by Faith, by Obedience. All things, the more perfect they are, the more doe they reduce themselves towards that unitie which is the Center of all perfection: Oh thou who art one, and infinite, draw-in my heart from all these stragling, and unprofitable Cogitations; and confine it to thine Hea-

ven, and to thy selfe, who art the Heaven of that Heaven. Let me have no life but in thee, no care but to injoy thee, no ambition but thy Glory; Oh make me thus imperfectly happy before my time; that when my time shall bee no more, I may bee perfectly happie with thee to all Eternity.

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XCII.

Vpon the ſight of an harlot carted.

WIth what noyſe and tumult, and zeale of ſolemne juſtice is this ſin puniſhed; the ſtreets are not more full of beholders, then clamours; Every one ſtrives to expreſſe his deteſtation of the fact, by ſome token of revenge; one caſts myre, another water, another rotten egges upon the miſerable offender; neither indeed is ſhee worthy of leſſe: but, in the meane time,

no man lookes home to himselfe; it is no uncharity to say, that too many insult in this just punishment, who have deserved more; Alas, wee men value sinnes by the outward scandall, but the wise and holy God (against whom onely our sinnes are done) esteemes them according to the intrinsecall iniquity of them: and according to the secret violation of his will and justice; thus, those sinnes which are sleight to us, are to him haynous. Wee ignorants would have rung *Davids* adulterie with Basins, but, as for his numbring

of

of the people, we ſhould have paſt it over as veniall; The wiſe juſtice of the Almighty found more wickedneſs in this, which wee ſhould ſcarce have accuſed; Doubtleſſe there is more miſchiefe in a ſecret infidelity, which the world either cannot know, or cares not to cenſure, then in the fouleſt adultery; Publique ſins have more ſhame, private may have more guilt; If the world cannot charge me of thoſe; it is enough that I can charge my Soule of worſe: let others rejoyce in theſe publique executions; Let me pitty the

finnes

sinnes of others, and be humbled under the sense of my owne.

XCIII.

Vpon the smell of a Rose.

SMelling is one of the meanest, and least useful of the senses; yet there is none of the five, that receives, or gives so exquisite a contentment as it; Mee thinkes there is no earthly thing that yeelds so perfect a pleasure to any sense, as the odour of the first rose doth, to the sent: It is the wisedome and bounty of the creator,

tor, ſo to order it, that thoſe ſenſes which have more affinity with the body, & with that earth whereof it is made, ſhould receive their delight and contentation by theſe things which are bred of the earth; but thoſe which are more ſpiritfull, and have more affinity with the Soule, ſhould bee reſerved for the perfection of their pleaſure, to another world; There, and then onely, ſhall my ſight make my ſoule eternally bleſſed.

XCIIII.

XCIIII.

Vpon a cancelled Bond.

WHiles this obligation was in force, I was in servitude to my parchment; my bond was double, to a payment, to a penalty; now, that is discharged, what is it better then a waste scrole; regarded for nothing but the witnesse of its owne voydance, and nullity. No otherwise is it with the severe Law of my Creator; Out of Christ it stands in full force, and bindes me over either to perfect

perfect obedience, which I cannot possibly performe, or to exquisite torment, and eternall Death, which I am never able to indure; But now, that my Saviour hath fastened it cancelled to his crosse (in respect of the rigour & malediction of it) I looke upon it as the monument of my past danger and bondage: I know by it, how much was owed by mee, how much is payed for mee; The direction of it, is everlasting, the obligation (by it) unto death is frustrate: I am free from curse, who never can be free from obedience. O Saviour,

Saviour, take thou glory, and give mee peace.

XCV.

Vpõ the report of a great loſſe by Sea.

THe earth and the water are both of them great givers, and both great takers: As they give matter and ſuſtentatiõ to all ſublunary creatures, ſo they take alback againe, inſatiably devouring, at laſt, the fruits of their owne wombs. Yet, of the two, the earth is both more beneficiall, and leſſe cruell; for, as

asthat yeilds us the moſt generall maintenance & wealth and ſupportatiõ; So it doth not lightly take ought from us, but that which we reſigne over to it, and which naturally falls backe unto it; Whereas the water, as it affords but a ſmall part of our live-lode, & ſome few knacks of ornament So it is apt violently to ſnatch away both us and ours: and to bereave that which it never gave: it yeilds us no procious metals, and yet in an inſtant fetches away millions; And yet, notwithſtanding all the hard meaſure we receive from it,

it, how many doe wee dayly ſee that might have firme ground under them, who yet will be truſting to the mercy of the Sea; Yea how many that have hardly crawled out from a deſperate ſhip-wracke, will yet be trying the fidelity of that unſure, and untruſty element: O God, how venturous we are, where we have reaſon to diſtruſt, how incredulouſly feareſull, where we have cauſe to be confident? Who ever relyed upon thy gracious providence, and ſure promiſes, O Lord, and hath miſ-carryed? Yet here we

we pull-in our faith, and make excuſes for our diffidence; and if *Peter* have tryed thoſe waves to be no other then ſolid pavement under his feet, whiles his Soule trod confidently; yet when a billow and a winde agree to threaten him, his faith flagges, and he begins to ſinke: O Lord, teach me to doubt where I am ſure to find nothing but uncertainty; and to be aſſuredly confident, where there can be no poſſibility of any cauſe of doubting.

XCVI.

XCVI.

Upon sight of a bright skie full of starres.

I Cannot blame *Empedocles* if he professed a desire to live upon earth, onely that he might behold the face of the heavens; surely (if there were no other) this were a sufficient errand for a mans being here below, to see and observe these goodly spangles of light above our heads, their places, their quantities, their motions: but the employment of a Christian is farre more noble,

noble, and excellent; heaven is open to him; and he can looke beyond the vayle, and ſee further above thoſe ſtarres, then it is thither; and there diſcerne thoſe glories, that may anſwer ſo rich a pavement; upon the cleare ſight whereof, I cannot wonder if the choſen veſſell deſired to leave the earth, in ſo happy an exchange. O God, I bleſſe thine infiniteneſſe, for what I ſee with theſe bodily eyes; but, if thou ſhalt but draw the curtaine, and let me by the eye of faith ſee the in-ſide of that thy glorious frame, I ſhall need

need no other happineſs here; My Soule cannot be capable of more fauour then ſight here, and fruition hereafter.

XCVII.

Vpon the rumors of Warres.

GOod Lord, what a ſhambles is Chriſtēdome becomne of late? How are men killed like flyes, and blood poured out like water? Surely the cruelty & ambitiō of the great have an heavie reckoning to make for ſo many thouſand ſoules;

I

I condemne not juſt armes; thoſe are as neceſſary, as the unjuſt are hatefull; even *Michael* and his Angels fight; and the ſtyle of God is the Lord of Hoſtes. But wo be to the man by whom the offence commeth; Uſurpation of others rights, violation of oathes and contracts, & laſtly erroneous zeale are guilty of all theſe publique murders. Private mens injuries are waſht off with teares, but wrongs done to Princes and publique States are hardly wipt off but with blood. Doubtleſſe that feareſull comet did not more

more certainly portend theſe warres, then theſe warres preſage the approach of the end of the world; The earth was never without ſome broyles, ſince it was peopled but with three men; but ſo univerſall a combuſtion was never in the Chriſtian world ſince it was: O Saviour, what can I thinke of this, but that, as thou wouldſt have a generall peace upon thy firſt comming into the world, ſo upon thy ſecond comming thou meaneſt there ſhall be a no leſſe generall warre upon earth: that peace made way for thy meeke

appea-

appearance; this warre for thy dreadfull and terrible.

XCVIII.

Vpon a Child crying.

IT was upon great reason, that the Apostle charges us not to be children in understanding. What fooles wee all once are? Even at first, we cry, and smile wee know not wherefore; we have not wit enough to make signes what hurts us, or where wee complayne; we can wrye the mouth, but not seeke the

breſt, and if we want helpe, we can onely lament, and ſprawle, and dye. After, when ſome months have taught us to diſtinguiſh a little betwixt things, and perſons, wee cry for every toye; even that, which may moſt hurt us; and, when there is no other cauſe, we cry onely to heare our own noyſe, and are ſtraight ſtilled with a greater; & if it be but upon the breeding of a tooth, we are ſo wayward, that nothing will pleaſe us; and if ſome formerly-liked knack be given to quiet us, wee caſt away that which we have,

have, if wee have not what wee would seeme to like. We feare neither fire, nor water, nothing scarres us but either a rod or a fayned bug-beare; we mis-know our parents, not acknowledging any friend but the Taylor, that brings us a fine coate, or the Nurse that dresses us gay; The more that our riper yeares resemble these dispositions, the more childish wee are, and more worthy both of our owne and others censure.

But againe, it was upon no lesse reason that the Apostle chatges us,

to be children in maliciouſneſſe: Thoſe little innocents beare no grudg; they are ſooner pleaſed, then angry; And if any man have wronged them, let them but have given a ſtroke unto the Nurſe, to beat the offender, it is enough; at the ſame inſtant they put forth their hand for reconcilement, and offer themſelves unto thoſe armes that treſpaſſed. And when they are moſt froward, they are ſtilled with a pleaſant ſong: The old word is, that an old man is twice a child; but I ſay, happy is he that is thus a child alwayes. It is

a great imperfection to want knowledge, but of the two, it is better to be a child in understanding, then a man in maliciousnesse.

XCIX.

Upon the beginning of a sickneſſe.

IT was my owne fault, if I look't not for this; All things muſt undergoe their changes; I have injoyed many fayre dayes, there was no reaſon I ſhould not at laſt make account of clouds, and ſtormes; Could I have

done well, without any mixtures of ſin; I might have hoped for entire health; But, ſince I have interſperſed my obedience with many ſinfull faylings, and enormities, why doe I thinke much, to interchange health with ſickeneſſe? What I now feele I know; I am not worthy to know what I muſt feele; As my times, ſo my meaſures are in the hands of a wiſe and good God; My comfort is, he that ſends theſe evils, proportions them; If they be ſharpe, I am ſure they are juſt; the moſt that I am capable to indure, is the leaſt part

of

of what I have deſerved to ſuffer: Nature would fayne be at eaſe; but, Lord what ever become of this carcaſſe, thou haſt reaſon to have reſpect to thine owne glory; I have ſinned and muſt ſmart; It is the glory of thy mercy to beat my body for the ſafety of my ſoule. The worſt of ſickneſſe is payne, and the worſt of payne is but death: As for payne, if it be extreme, it cannot be long; and if it be long, (ſuch is the difference of earthly, and helliſh torments) it cannot be extreme; As for death, it is both unavoydable, and

beneficiall; there ends my misery, and begins my glory; A few groanes are well bestowed for a preface to an immortall joy. How soever, O God, thy messenger is worthy to be welcome; It is the Lord, let him do whatsoever he will.

C.

Upon the challenge of a promise.

IT is true; an honest mans word must be his maister; when I have promised I am indebted, and

and debts may be claymed; must be payed; but yet, there is a great deale of difference in our ingagements; Some things wee promise because they are due; some things are onely due, because they are promised. These latter, which are but the mere ingagements of curtesie, cannot so absolutely binde us, that notwithstading any intervention of unworthinesse, or misbehaviour in the person expectant, Wee are tyed to make our word good; though to the cutting of our owne throates. All favourable promises pre-

suppose a capacity in the receiver; where that palpably fayleth, common equity sets us free; I promised to send a faire sword to my frend; he is, since that time turn'd frantick; must I send it, or be charged with unfaithfulnesse, if I send it not? O God, thy title is the God of truth, thou canst no more cease to be faithfull, then to be; How oft hast thou promised, that no good thing shall be wanting to thine, and yet wee know thy dearest children have complayned of want? Is thy word therefore challengable?

Farre, farre, be this wicked presumption from our thoughts. No: These thy promises of outward favours are never but with a subintelligence of a condition: of our capablenesse, of our expedience. Thou seest that plenty, or ease would be our bane; thy love forbeares to satisfie us with an harmfull blessing: We are worthy to be plagued with prejudiciall kindnesses, if we do not acknowledge thy wisedome, and care in our want. It is enough for us that thy best mercies are our dues, because thy promises; we cannot too much

much clayme that which thou haſt abſolutely ingaged thy ſelfe to give, and in giving ſhalt make us eternally happy.

CI.

Vpon the ſight of flies.

WHen I looke upon theſe flyes; and gnats, and wormes, I have reaſon to thinke; What am I to my infinite Creator more then theſe? And if theſe had my reaſon, why might they not expoſtulate with their Maker, Why they are but ſuch; why they

they live to ſo little purpoſe, and dye without either notice or uſe; and if I had no more reaſon then they, I ſhould bee (as they) content with any condition; That reaſon which I have, is not of my owne giving; he that hath given mee reaſon, might as well have given it to them; or, have made me as reaſon-leſſe as they; there is no cauſe why his greater gift ſhould make me mutinous, and malecontent; I will thanke my God for what I am, for what I have; and never quarrel with him, for what I want.

CII.

CII.

Vpon the sight of a fantasticall Zelote.

IT is not the intent of grace to mold our bodies anew, but to make use of them, as it findes us; the disposition of men much followes the temper of their bodily humors. This mixture of humors, wrought upon by grace, causeth that strange variety, which we see in professions pretendedly religious; when grace lights upon a sad melancholike Spirit, nothing is affected but sullenesse,

lenneſſe, and extreme mortification; and diſlike even of lawfull freedome; nothing but poſitions, and practiſes of ſevere auſterity; when contrarily, upon the cheereſull and lively; all drawes towards liberty and joy, thoſe thoughts doe now pleaſe beſt, which enlarge the heart to mirth, and contentation; It is the greateſt improvement of Chriſtian wiſdome to diſtinguiſh (in all profeſſions) betwixt grace and humor; to give God his own glory, and men their owne infirmityes.

CIII.

Vpon the ſight of a Scavenger working in the channel.

THe wiſe providence of God hath fitted men with ſpirits anſwerable to their condition; If meane men ſhould beare the minds of great Lords, no ſervile workes would be done; al would be commaunders, and none could live; If contrarily, great perſons had the low ſpirits of drudges, there could be no order, no obedience; becauſe

cauſe there ſhould be none to command; now, out of this diſcord of diſpoſitions, God hath contrived an excellent harmony of government, and peace: ſince the uſe which each ſort muſt needs have of other, bindes them to maintain the quality of their own rankes; and to do thoſe offices which are requiſite for the preſervation of themſelves, and the publique. As inferiours then muſt bleſſe God for the graces and authority of their betters; So muſt Superiours no leſſe bleſſe him for the humilitie and ſerviceableneſſe

of

of the meaner; and those which are of the mid-rank, must blesse him for both.

CIIII.

Vpon a payre of Spectacles.

I Looke upon these, not as objects, but as helps; as not meaning that my sight should rest in them; but passe through them; and by their aid, discerne some other things which I desire to see; many such glasses my soule hath and useth: I looke through the glasse of the creatures

creatures, at the power and wiſedome of their maker: I looke through the glaſſe of the Scriptures at the great myſtery of redemption and the glory of an heavenly inheritance; I looke through Gods favours, at his infinite mercy; through his judgements, at his incomprehenſible juſtice; but as theſe ſpectacles of mine preſuppoſe a faculty in the eye, and cannot give me ſight when I want it, but only cleares that ſight which I have; no more can theſe glaſſes of the creatures, of Scriptures, of favours and judgements inable mee

mee to apprehend thoſe bleſſed objects, except I have an eye of faith whereto they may bee preſented; theſe helps to an unbeleeving man, are but as ſpectacles to the blinde. As the naturall eyes, ſo the ſpirituall have their degrees of dimneſſe; but I have ill impsoved my age, if, as my naturall eyes decay, my ſpirituall eye bee not cleared and confirmed; but at my beſt I ſhall never but need ſpectacles, till I come to ſee as I am ſeene.

CV.

CV.

Vpon moates in the Sun.

How theſe little moats move up and downe in the Sunne, and never reſt, whereas the great mountaines ſtand ever ſtill, and move not, but with an earthquake; even ſo light and buſie ſpirits are in continuall agitation, to little purpoſe; whiles great deepe wits ſit ſtill, and ſtirre not, but upon extreme occaſions: were the motion of theſe little atomes as uſefull, as it is reſtleſſe, I had rather bee a moat then a mountaine. CVI.

CVI.

Vpon the ſight of a bladder.

EVery thing muſt bee taken in his meete time; let this bladder alone till it be dry, and all the winde in the world cannot raiſe it up, whereas, now it is new, and moiſt, the leaſt breath fills, and enlarges it; it is no otherwiſe in ages, and diſpoſitions; informe the child in precepts of learning & vertue, whiles years make him capable, how plyably hee yeeldeth, how happily is hee repleniſhed

replenished with knowledge and goodnesse; let him alone, till time and ill example have hardened him; till hee be setled in an habit of evill, and contracted, and clung together with sensuall delights, now hee becomes utterly indocible; sooner may that bladder bee broken then distended.

CVII.

Vpon a man sleeping.

I Do not more wonder at any mans art, then at his, who professes to thinke

thinke of nothing, to do nothing: and I do not a little marvell at that man who ſayes hee can ſleepe without a dreame; for the minde of man is a reſtleſſe thing: & though it give the body leave to repoſe it ſelf, as knowing it is a mortall & earthly peece, yet it ſelfe being a ſpirit, and therefore active, and indefatigable, is ever in motion: give me a ſea that møves not, a Sunne that ſhines not, an open eye that ſees not; and I ſhall yeeld there may bee a reaſonable ſoule that workes not: It is poſſible that through a naturall, or accidentall

tall ſtupidity, a man may not perceive his owne thoughts; (as ſometimes the eye or eare may bee diſtracted, not to diſcerne his owne obiects) but in the meane time, he thinkes that, whereof he cannot give an account; like as wee many times dreame when we cannot report our fancy. I ſhould more eaſily put my ſelfe to ſchoole unto that man, who undertakes the profeſſion of thinking many things at once: Inſtantany motions are more proper for a ſpirit, then a dull reſt. Since my mind wil needs be ever working, it ſhall

bee my care that it may alwaies be wel imploy'd.

CVIII.

Vpon the sight of a deaths-head.

I Wonder at the practise of the ancient both Greeks, and Romans, whose use was to bring up a deaths-head in the midst of their feasts, on purpose to stir up their guests, to drinke harder, and to frolicke more; the sight whereof, one would think should have rather abated their courage, and have tem-

pered

pered their jollity; but however it was with them, who beleeved there was nothing after death; that the consideration of the short time of their pleasures, and beeing, spurred them on to a free and full fruition of that mirth and excesse, which they should not long live to enjoy; yet to us that are Christians, and therefore know that this short life doth but make way for an eternity of joy, or torment afterwards, and that after the feast, wee must account of a reckoning; there cannot be a greater cooler for the

heat of our intemperate desires, and rage of our appetites, then the meditation of the shortnesse of life, and the certainty of death: Who would over-pamper a body for the wormes? who would be so mad as to let himselfe loose to that momentany pleasure of sin, which, ere long, must cost him everlasting pain, and miserie. For mee, mee thinkes this head speakes no other language then this; Leese no time, thou art dying, do thy best, thou maist do good but a while, and shalt fare well for ever.

CIX.

CIX.

Vpon the ſight of a left-handed man.

IT is both an old and eaſie obſervation, that however the ſenſes are alike ſtrong, and active on the right ſide, and on the left; yet that the limbes on the right ſide are ſtronger then thoſe of the left; becauſe they are more exerciſed then the other; upon which ſelfe ſame reaſon it muſt follow, that a left-handed man hath more ſtrength in his left arme, then in his right; neither

is it otherwise in the soule: our intellectuall parts grow vigorous with imployment, and languish with disuse: I have knowne excellent preachers, and pregnant disputants that have lost these faculties with lacke of action; and others, but meanly qualified with naturall gifts, that have attained to a laudable measure of abilities, by improvement of their little. I had rather lacke good parts, then that good parts should lacke mee; Not to have great gifts is no fault of mine, it is my fault not to use them.

CX.

CX.

Vpon the sight of an old unthached Cottage.

THere cannot bee a truer embleme of crazie old age; Moldred and clay walls; a thinne, uncovered roofe; bending studds; darke and broken windowes; in short, an house ready to fall on the head of the indweller: The best body is but a cottage; if newer, and better timbred, yet such as age will equally impaire, and make

thus ragged, & ruinous; or, before that, perhaps casualty of fire or tẽpest; or violence of an enemy; One of the chief cares of men is to dwel wel; some build for themselves, faire but not strong; others build for posterity, strong, but not faire, not high; but happy is that man that builds for eternity, as strong, as faire, as high as the glorious contignations of heaven.

CXI.

CXI.

Vpon the ſight of a faire pearle.

WHat a pure and precious creature is this, which yet is taken out of the mudde of the ſea; Who can complaine of a baſe original, when hee ſees ſuch excellencies ſo deſcended? Theſe ſhel-fiſhes that have no ſexes, and therefore are made out of corruption, what glorious things they yeeld, to adorne and make proud the greateſt princeſſes? Gods great workes goe

not by likely-hoods; how eaſily can he fetch glory out of obſcurity, who brought all out of nothing?

CXII.

Vpon a ſcreene.

MEE thinkes this ſcreene, that ſtands betwixt me and the fire, is like ſome good friend at the Court, which keepes from mee the heate of the unjuſt diſpleaſure of the great; wherewith I might perhaps otherwiſe be cauſe-

leſly

lessly scorched; but how happy am I, if the interposition of my Saviour, my best friend in heaven, may screene mee from the deserved wrath of that great God, who is a consuming fire.

CXIIII.

Vpon a Burre-leafe.

NEither the vine, nor the oake, nor the Cedar, nor any tree, that I know, within our climate, yeelds so great a leafe as this weed, which yet, after all expectation, brings

brings forth nothing but a burre, unprofitable, troublesome; So have I seene none make greater profession of religion, then an ignorant man; whose indiscreet forwardnesse yeelds no fruit but a factious disturbance to the Church, wherein hee lives; Too much shew is not so much better then none at all, as an ill fruit is worse then none at all.

CXIV.

CXIV.

Vpon the singing of a Bird.

IT is probable that none of those creatures that want reason, delight so much in pleasant sounds, as a bird; Whence it is, that both it spends so much time in singing; and is more apt to imitate those modulations which it heares from men; Frequent practise (if it bee voluntary) argues a delight in that which wee doe; and delight makes us more apt to practise; and more capable

capable of perfection in that wee practise; Oh God, if I take pleasure in thy law, I shall meditate of it with comfort, speake of it with boldnesse, and practise it with chearefulnesse.

CXV.

Vpon the sight of a man Yawning.

IT is a marvellous thing to see the reall effects and strong operation of consent, or Sympathye, even where there is no bodily touch; So one sad man puts the whole cõ-

pany

pany into dumps; So one mans yawning affects, and ſtretches the jawes of many beholders; So, the looking upon bleare eyes taints the eye with bleareneſſe; From hence it is eaſie to ſee the ground of our Saviours expoſtulation with his perſecutor; Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou mee? The Church is perſecuted below, hee feeles it above, and complaines; So much as the perſon is more apprehenſive, muſt hee needs bee more affected. O Saviour, thou canſt not but bee deeply ſenſible of all our miſeries and neceſſities.

neceſſities. If wee doe not feele thy wrongs, and the wants of our brethren, wee have no part in thee.

CXVI.

Vpon the ſight of a tree lopped.

IN the lopping of theſe trees, experience, and good husbandry hath taught men to leave one bough ſtill growing in the top; the better to draw up the ſappe from the root. The like wiſedome is fit to bee obſerved in cenſures; which are

are intended altogether for reformation, not for destruction; So must they bee inflicted, that the patient be not utterly discouraged, and stript of hope, and comfort; but that, whiles hee suffereth, he may feele his good tendered, and his amendment both aimed at, and expected. O God if thou shouldest deale with mee as I deserve, thou shouldest not only shred my boughes, but cut downe my stocke, and stocke up my root; and yet thou dost but prune my superfluous branches, and cherishest the rest; how unworthy

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am I of this mercy, if whiles thou art thus indulgent unto mee, I bee severe and cruell to others, perhaps lesse-ill-deserving then my selfe?

CXVII.

Upon a Scholler that offered violence to himselfe.

HAd this man lyen lõg under some eminent discontentment, it had been easie to find out the motive of his mis-carriage; Weake nature is easily over-laid with impatience;

tience; it must bee onely the power of grace, that can graple with vehement evils, and maister them: But here the world cannot say what could be guilty of occasioning this violence; this mans hand was full; his fame untainted; his body no burden; his disposition (for ought wee saw) faire; his life guiltlesse; yet something did the tempter finde to aggravate unto his feeble thoughts, and to represent worthy of a dispatch; What a poore thing is life, whereof so sleight occasions can make us weary? What impotent

impotent wretches are wee when wee are not sustained? One would thinke this the most impossible of all motions; naturally, every man loves himselfe; and life is sweet, death abhorred; What is it that Sathan can despaire to perswade men unto, if hee can draw them to an unnaturall abandoning of life, and pursuit of death: Why should I doubt of prevailing with my own heart, by the powerfull over-ruling of Gods spirit, to contemne life, and to affect death, for the sake of my Saviour (in exchange of a few miserable

rable moments, for eternity of joy) when I see men, upon an unreasonable suggestion of that evill spirit, cast away their lives for nothing, and so hastening their temporall death, that they hazard an eternall?

CXVIII.

Vpon the comming in of the Iudge.

THe construction of men and their actions is altogether according to the disposition of the lookers on. The same

same face of the Judge without any inward alteration, is seene with terror by the guilty, with joy and confidence, by the oppressed innocent; like as the same lips of the bride-groome drop both myrrhe and hony at once; hony to the well disposed heart; myrrhe to the rebellious: And the same cup relishes well to the healthfull, and distasts the feverous; the same word is, though a sweet, yet a contrary savour to the different receivers: and the same Sunne comforts the strong sight, dazles the weake; For a man

man to affect either to do, or speake that which may bee pleasing to all men, is but a weake and idle ambition, when wee see him that is infinitely good, appeare terrible to more, then he appears lovely. Goodnesse is it selfe with what ever eyes it is lookt upon: There can be no safety for that man that regards more the censure of men, then the truth of beeing; Hee that seekes to win all hearts, hath lost his own.

CXIX.

CXIX.

Vpon the sight of an heap of stones.

VNder such a pile it was, that the first martyr was buried; none of all the ancient Kings had so glorious a tombe; here were many stones, and every one pretious; *Iacob* leaned his head upon a stone, and saw that heavenly vision of Angels ascending, and descending: Many stones light upon *Stevens* head, in the instant of his seeing the heavens opened; and

and Jesus standing at the right hand of God: Lo, *Iacob*, resting upon that one stone, saw but the Angells; *Steven* being to rest for once under those many stones, saw the Lord of the Angels; *Iacob* saw the Angels moving; *Steven* saw Jesus standing; As *Iacob* therefore afterwards, according to his vow, made there an altar to God; so *Steven* now in the present, gathers these stones together, of which hee erected an holy altar, whereon hee offered up himself a blessed sacrifice unto God; and if there bee a time of gathering

O stones,

ſtones, and a time of caſting them away, this was the time wherein the Jewes caſt, and *Steven* gathered up theſe ſtones for a monument of eternall glory: O bleſſed Saint, thou didſt not ſo clearly ſee heaven opened, as heaven ſaw thee covered; thou didſt not ſo perfectly ſee thy Jeſus ſtanding, as hee ſaw thee lying, patiently, courageouſly under that fatall heap: Do I miſtake it, or are thoſe ſtones, not flints and pebles, but diamonds and rubies, & carbuncles to ſet upon thy crowne of glory?

CXX.

Vpon ſight of a Bat and Owle.

THeſe night-birds are glad to hide their heads all day, and if by ſome violence they bee unſeaſonably forced out of their ſecrecy, how are they followed, and beaten by the birds of the day? With us men it is contrary, the ſonnes of darkneſſe do with all eagerneſſe of malice purſue the children of the light: and drive them into corners, and make a prey of them: the oppo-

sition is alike, but the advantage lyes on the worse side; Is it for that the spirituall light is no lesse hatefull to those children of darkenesse, then the naturall night is to those cheerfull birds of the day? Or is it for that the sonnes of darkenesse, challenging no lesse propriety in the world, then the foules do in the lightsome aire, abhorre and wonder at the conscionable, as strange and uncouth: howsoever, as these Bats and Owles were made for the night, being accordingly shaped, foule, and ill-favoured; so we know

know these vicious men, (how ever they may please themselves) have in them a true deformity; fit to bee shrouded in darkneſſe; and as they delight in the workes of darkneſſe, so they are justly reserved to a state of darkneſſe.

CXXI.

Upon the sight of a well-fleeced sheepe.

WHat a warm winter coat hath God provided for this quiet innocent creature? as in-

deed, how wonderfull is his wiſedome and goodnes in all his purveiances; thoſe creatures which are apter for motion, and withall moſt fearfull by nature, hath hee clad ſomewhat thinner, and hath allotted them ſafe and warme boroughs within the earth; thoſe that are fit for labour and uſe, hath hee furniſhed with a ſtrong hide: & for man whom he hath thought good to bring forth naked, tender, helpleſſe; he hath indued his parents, and himſelfe with that noble faculty of reaſon, whereby hee may provide all manner

manner of helps for himselfe; Yet againe so bountifull is God in his provisions, that hee is not lavish; so distributing his gifts, that there is no more superfluity, then want; Those creatures that have beakes, have no teeth; and those that have shells without, have no bones within; All have enough, nothing hath all: Neither is it otherwise in that one kinde of man, whom hee meant for the Lord of all; Variety of gifts is here mixed with a frugall dispensation; None hath cause to boast, none to complain; Every man

is as free from an abſolute defect, as from perfection; I deſire not to comprehend, O Lord, teach mee to doe nothing but wonder.

CXXII.

Vpon the hearing of Thunder.

THere is no grace whereof I finde ſo generall a want in my ſelfe, and others, as an awfull feare of the infinite majeſty of God; Men are ready to affect; and profeſſe a kinde of familia-

familiarity with God, out of a pretence of love whereas if they knew him aright, they could not thinke of him without dread, nor name him without trembling; their narrow hearts strive to conceive of him, according to the scantling of their owne strait, and ignorant apprehension; whereas they should only desire to have their thoughts swallowed up with an adoring wonder of his divine incomprehensiblenesse; though he thunder not alwaies, he is alwaies equally dreadfull; there is none of his works which doth

not bewray omnipotency: I bluſh at the ſaweineſſe of vaine men, that will bee circumſcribing the powerfull acts of the Almighty within the compaſſe of naturall cauſes; forbearing to wonder at what they profeſſe to know; Nothing but ignorance can be guilty of this boldneſſe; There is no divinity but in an humble feare, no philoſophie but in a ſilent admiration.

CXXIII.

CXXIII.

Vpon the ſight of an hedg-hogge.

I Marvelled at the firſt reading, what the Greekes meant by that proverbe of theirs; The Foxe knowes many pretty wiles, but the hedg-hogge knowes one great one: but when I conſidered the nature, and practiſe of this creature, I eaſily found the reaſon of that ſpeech, grounded upon the care, and ſhift that it makes for its owne preſervation; whiles it is under covert

it

it knowes how to barre the fore-dore againſt the cold Northerne, and Eaſterne blaſts; and to open the back-doore for quieter and calmer aire; When it is purſued, it knowes how to roll up it ſelfe round, within thoſe thornes with which nature hath environd it, ſo as the dogge, in ſtead of a beaſt, findes now nothing but a ball of prickes, to wound his jawes; and goes away crying from ſo untoothſome a prey: Hee that ſent the ſluggard to ſchoole to the piſmire, ſends alſo in effect the careleſſe and imprudent man

man to the hedg-hogge; whiles hee ſaith, if thou bee wiſe thou ſhalt bee wiſe for thy ſelfe: The maine care of any creature is ſelf-preſervation; whatſoever doth that beſt, is the wiſeſt. Theſe creatures that are all body, have well improved the inſtincts of nature, if they can provide for their bodily ſafety; Man, that is a reaſõable Soule, ſhall have done nothing, if he make not ſure work for the better part. O God, make mee Soule-wiſe, I ſhall never envy their craft, that pitty my ſimplicity.

CXXIV.

CXXIV.

Vpon the sight of a Goate.

THis creature is in an ill name; it is not for any good qualities, that God hath made choice of the goate, to resemble the wicked and reprobate soule; It is unruly, and salacious, and noysome; I cannot see one of them, but I presently recall to my thoughts the wofull condition of those on the left hand; whom God hath set aside to so fearefull a damnation. They are

are here mixed with the flock, their colour differs nothing from the sheepe; or if wee doe discerne them, by their rougher coate, and odious sent, wee sever our selves from them; but the time shal come, when he shall sever them from us, who hath appointed our innocencie to the fold, and their harmefulnesse to an everlasting slaughter. Onwards, if they climbe higher then wee, and feede upon those craggy clifts which wee dare scarce reach to with our eyes; their boldnesse is not greater then their danger, neither

ther is their ascent more perilous, then their ruine deadly.

CXXV.

Vpon the sight of the blinde and the lame.

HEre is a true naturall commerce of senses; The blinde man hath legges; the lame man hath eyes; the lame man lendes his eyes to the blinde, the blinde man lendes his legges to the lame; and now both of them move; where otherwise,

therwiſe, both muſt ſit ſtill, and periſh; it is hard to ſay whether is more beholden to other; the one gives ſtrength, the other direction; both of them equally neceſſary to motion; though it bee not in other caſes ſo ſenſible, yet ſurely this very trafique of faculties is that, whereby we live, neither could the world ſubſiſt without it; one man lends a braine, another an arme; one a tongue, another an hand; he that knowes wherefore hee made all, hath taken order to improve every part to the benefit of the whole; What

doe

doe I wish ought that is not usefull? And if there bee any thing in me that may serve to the good of others, it is not mine, but the Churches: I cannot live but by others, it were injurious if others should not likewise share with mee.

CXXVI.

Upon the sight of a Mappe of the World.

WHat a poore little spot is a coūtry? A man may hide with his thumbe,

thumbe, the great territories of thoſe, that would bee accounted Monarchs. In vain ſhould the great Cham, or the great Mogull, or Preſter John ſeeke here for his Court; it is well, if hee can finde his kingdome, amongſt theſe parcels: And, if wee take all together theſe ſhreds of Ilands, and theſe patches of Continent, what a mere indiviſible point they are in compariſon of that vaſt circle of heaven wherewith they are incompaſſed? It is not eaſie for a man to bee knowne to that whole land wherein hee lives: but

but if he could be ſo famous, the next country perhaps never heares of his name: and if he can attaine be talked of there, yet the remoter parts cānot take notice that there is ſuch a thing: and if they did all ſpeake of nothing elſe, what were hee the better? Oh the narrow bounds of earthly glory: Oh the vaine affectation of humane applauſe: Only that man is happily famous, who is known, & recorded in heaven.

CXXVII.

CXXVII.

Vpon the ſight of hemlocke.

THere is no creature of it ſelfe, evill: miſapplication may make the beſt, ſo: and there is a good uſe to be made of the worſt: This weed which is too well approved to be poyſonous, yet to the Goat is medicinall: as ſerving by the coldneſſe of it, to temper the feverons heat of that beaſt: ſo wee ſee the Marmoſet eating of ſpiders, both for pleaſure, and

and cure: Our ignorance may not bring a ſcandall upon Gods workmanſhip, or if it do, his wiſedome knowes how to make a good uſe even of our injury: I cannot ſay but the very venome of the creatures is to excellent purpoſe, how much more their beneficiall qualities? If ought hurt us, the fault is ours, in miſ-taking the evill for good: in the meane time wee owe praiſe to the maker and to the creature a juſt and thankfull allowance.

CXXVIII.

CXXVIII.

Vpon a Flowre-de-luce.

THis flowre is but unpleasingly fulsome for sent, but the root of it is so fragrant, that the delicatest Ladies are glad to put it into their sweet bagges: contrarily the rose-tree hath a sweet flowre, but a savour-lesse root, and the saffron yeelds an odoriferous and cordiall spire, whiles both the flowre, and the root are unpleasing: It is with vegitables, as with mettals, God never meant to have

have his best alwayes in view; neither meant hee to have all eminences concealed. Hee would have us to know him to be both secretly rich, and openly bountifull. If we do not use every grace in its owne kinde, God leeses the thankes, and wee the benefit.

CXXIX.

Vpon the sight of two trees, one high, the other broad.

Those trees that shoot up in height are seldome broad; as contrarily,

rily, thoſe trees that are ſpreading, are ſeldome tall: it were too much ambition in that plant, which would bee both wayes eminent: Thus it is with men; The covetous man that affects to ſpread in wealth, ſeldome cares to aſpire unto height of honour: the proud man, whoſe heart it ſet upon preferment, regards not (in comparison thereof) the growth of his wealth: There is a poore ſhrubbe in a valley; that is neither tall nor broad, nor cares to be either, which ſpeeds better then they both: the tall tree is cut

downe, for timber, the broad tree is lopped for firewood: besides that the tempest hath power on them both, whereas the low shrubbe is neither envied by the winde, nor threatned by the axe, but fostered rather, for that little shelter, which it affords the shepheard: If there bee glory in greatnes, meanesse hath security: Let me never envy their diet, that had rather bee unsafe, then inglorious.

CXXX.

Vpon the sight of a drunken man.

REason is an excellent facultie; and indeed, that which alone differenceth us from brute creatures; without which what is man but a two-legged beast? and, as all precious things are tender, and subject to miscarriage, so is this above others; the want of some little sleepe, the violence of a fever, or one cup too much puts it into utter distemper; What can we

make of this thing (Man I cannot call him?) Hee hath shape; so hath a dead corps, as well as he; hee hath life, so hath a beast as well as hee; Reason, either for the time hee hath not, or, if hee have it, he hath it so depraved, and marred for the exercise of it, that brutishnesse is much lesse ill-beseeming; Surely, the naturall bestiality is so much lesse odious then the morall, as there is difference in the causes of both; That is of Gods making, this of our own It is no shame to the beast, that God hath made him so, it is a just shame

ſhame to a man, that he hath made himſelfe a beaſt.

CXXXI.

Vpon the whetting of a ſithe.

REcreation is intended to the minde, as whetting is to the ſithe; to ſharpen the edge of it; which otherwiſe would grow dull, and blunt; hee therefore that ſpends his whole time in recreation, is ever whetting, never mowing; his graſſe may grow, and his ſteed ſtarve; as contrari-

ly he that alwaies toyles, and never recreates, is ever mowing, never whetting; labouring much to little purpose: as good no sithe, as no edge: Then onely doth the work goe forward, when the sithe is so seasonably, and moderately whetted, that it may cut, and so cuts that it may have the helpe of sharpening: I would so interchange, that I neither be dull with worke, nor idle and wanton with recreation.

CXXXII.

CXXXII.

Vpon the ſight of a looking-glaſſe.

WHen I looke in another mans face, I ſee that man, and that man ſees mee, as I doe him: but when I looke in my glaſſe, I doe not ſee my ſelfe: I ſee onely an image or repreſentation of my ſelfe: howſoever it is like mee, yet it is not I: it is for an ignorant child to looke behinde the glaſſe, to finde out the babe that he ſeeeth: I know it is not there: and that the re-

ſemblance varies according to the dimneſſe, or different faſhion of the glaſſe. At our beſt, wee doe but thus ſee God here below: One ſees him more clearely, another more obſcurely: but all in a glaſſe: Hereafter, wee ſhall ſee him, not as he appeares, but as hee is: So ſhall wee ſee him in the face, as hee ſees us: The face of our glorified Spirits ſhall ſee the glorious face of him who is the God of Spirits: In the meane time, the proudeſt dame ſhall not more plie her glaſſe, to looke upon that face of hers, which ſhee thinkes

thinkes beautifull, then I ſhall gaze upon the cleareſt glaſſe of my thoughts, to ſee that face of God, which I know to bee infinitely faire, and glorious.

CXXXIII.

Vpon the ſhining of a peece of rotten wood.

HOw bright doth this wood ſhine? When it is in the fire, it will not ſo beame forth, as it doth in this cold darkneſſe: What an emblem is here of our fu-

ture eſtate? This peece, whiles it grew in the tree, ſhone not at all, now that it is putrified, it caſts forth this pleaſing luſtre: Thus it is with us: whiles wee live here, we neither are, nor ſeeme other then miſerable: When we are dead once, then begins our glory, then doth the ſoule ſhine in the brightneſſe of heavenly glory, then doth our good name ſhine upon earth in thoſe beames which before envie had either held in, or over-caſt.

Why are wee ſo over-deſirous of our growth, when wee may bee

bee thus advantaged by our rottennesse?

CXXXIV.

Vpon an Yvie tree.

BEhold a true Embleme of false love: here are kinde embracements, but deadly: how close doth this weed cling unto that Oake, and seemes to hugge, and shade it? but in the mean time drawes away the sappe, and at last kils it: Such is an harlots love, such is a parasites: Give mee that love, and friendship, which is between

tweene the vine, and the elme, whereby the elme is no whit worse, and the vine much the better: That wholesome and noble plant doth not so close winde it selfe about the tree, that upholds it, as to gall the barke, or to sucke away the moisture: and againe the elme yeelds a beneficiall supportation to that weake (though generous) plant. As God, so wise men know to measure love, not by profession, and complement, (which is commonly most high, and vehement in the falsest) but by reality of performance:

Hee

Hee is no enemie that hurts mee not: I am not his friend whom I desire not to benefit.

CXXXV.

Upon a quartan ague.

I Have known whē those things, which have made an healthfull man sick, have been the means of making a sick man, whole. The quartan hath of old been justly stiled the shame of Physicians: Yet, I have more then once observed it to bee cured by a surfet: One divel is sōetime used for the ejection

ejection of another; Thus have I also seene it in the sickneſſe of the Soule: The same God whoſe justice is wont to punish sinne with sinne; even his mercy doth so use the matter, that he cures one sinne by another; So have we knowne a proud man healed by the shame of his uncleanneſſe: a furious man healed by a rash bloodshed. It matters not greatly what the medicine bee, whiles the Physician is infinitely powerfull, infinitely skilfull; What danger can there be of my safty, whē God shall heale me, as well by evill, as by good?

CXXXVI.

CXXXVI.

Vpon the sight of a loaded cart.

IT is a passionate expression, wherein God bemoanes himselfe of the sinnes of Israel, Ye have pressed mee as a cart is pressed with sheaves; An empty cart runs lightly away, but if it be soundly laden, it goes sadly, sets hard, groanes under the weight, and makes deepe impressions; the wheeles creak, and the axeltree bends, and all the frame of it is put unto the utmost streſſe, He that

that is ōnipotēt can bear any thing but too much ſin; his Juſtice wil not let his mercy be over-ſtrained; No marvel if a guilty Soul ſay, Mine iniquity is greater then I can beare; When the infinite God complaines of the weight of mens ſins; But, let not vaine men thinke that God complaines, out of the want of power, but, out of the abundance of mercy: He cannot be the worſe for our ſinnes; wee are. It grieves him to bee over-provoked to our puniſhment; Then doth Hee accoũt the cart to crack, yea to breake, when hee

is

is urged to breake forth into juſt vengeance; O Saviour, the ſins of the whole world lay upon thee, thou ſweatedſt blood under the loade: what would become of mee, if I ſhould beare but one ſheafe of that loade; every eare whereof, yea every graine of that eare were enough to preſſe downe my Soule to the nethermoſt hell?

CXXXVII.

CXXXVII.

Vpon the ſight of a Dwarfe.

AMongſt all the bounteous gifts of God, what is it that he hath equally beſtowed upon all? except it be our very being, whiles we are; he hath not given to all men the ſame ſtature of body, not the ſame ſtrength of wit, not the ſame capacity of memory, not the ſame beauty of parts, not the ſame meaſure of wealth, or honor; thus hath hee done alſo in matter of grace,

grace: there are spirituall dwarfes, there are giants; there are perfect men, children, babes, embryons; this inequality doth so much more praise the mercy, and wisedome of the giver, and exercise the charity, and thankefulnesse of the receiver; the essence of our humanity doth not consist in stature, he that is little of growth, is as much man, as hee that is taller; Even so also spiritually, the quantity of grace doth not make the Christian, but the truth of it. I shall be glad, and ambitious to adde cubits to my height; but with-

all

all it shall comfort mee to know, that I cannot bee so low of stature, as not to reach unto heaven.

CXXXVIII.

Vpon an importunate Begger.

IT was a good rule of him that bad us learne to pray of beggers; with what zeale doth this man sue, with what feeling expressions, with how forceable importunity? When I meant to passe by him with silēce, yet his clamour drawes words

words from mee; when I speake to him, though with excuses, rebukes, denialls, repulses, his obsecrations, his adjurations draw from me that almes which I meant not to give; how hee uncovers his sores, & shewes his impotence, that my eyes may help his tongue to plead; With what oratory doth he force my compassion? so as it is scarce any thanke to mee that hee prevailes. Why doe I not thus to my God? I am sure I want no lesse then the neediest; the danger of my want is greater; the almes that I crave, is better,

ter, the store and mercy of the giver infinitely more, Why shouldst thou give mee, O God, that which I care not to aske? Oh give me a true sense of my wants, and then I cannot bee coole in asking, thou canst not bee difficult in condescending.

CXXXIX.

CXXXIX.

Vpon a medicinal potion.

HOw loathſome a draught is this? how offenſive, both to the eye and to the ſent, and to the taſt? yea, the very thought of it, is a kind of ſickneſſe; &, when it is once down, my very diſeaſe is not ſo painefull, for the time, as my remedy; how doth it turne the ſtomach, and wring the entrayles, and workes a worſe diſtemper, then that whereof I formerly complained; And yet, it muſt bee taken

ken for health; neither could it bee ſo wholeſome, if it were leſſe unpleaſing; neither could it make mee whole, if it did not firſt make mee ſick.

Such are the chaſtiſements of God, and the reproofes of a friend; harſh, troubleſome, grievous; but in the end they yeeld the peaceable fruit of righteouſneſſe.

Why doe I turne away my head, and make faces, and ſhut mine eyes; and ſtop my noſtrils, and nauſeate, and abhorre to take this harmeleſſe potion for health, when we have ſeene Mountebanks to

to swallow dis membred toades, and drinke the poysonous broath after them, only for a little ostentation, and gaine? It is onely weakneſſe, and want of reſolution that is guilty of this queaſineſſe; Why doe not I cheerefully take, and quaffe up that bitter cup of affliction, which my wiſe and good God hath mixed for the health of my Soule?

CXL.

Vpon the ſight of a Wheel.

THe Prophet meant it for no other then a fearefull imprecation againſt Gods enemies, O my God, make them like unto a wheele; whereby what could he intend to ſignifie, but inſtability of condition, and ſuddaine violence of judgement; Thoſe ſpoakes of the wheele that are now up, are, ſooner then ſight or thought whirled downe; and are ſtraight raiſed up againe, on purpoſe to bee depreſſed; Neither

Neither can there bee any motion ſo rapid, and ſwift, as the circular. It is a great favour of God that hee takes leaſure in his affliction, ſo puniſhing us that wee have reſpites of repentance: there is life and hope in theſe degrees of ſuffering; but, thoſe hurrying and whirling judgemēts of God, have nothing in them but wrath, and confuſion. O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger; I cannot deprecate thy rebuke; my ſinnes call for correction; but I deprecate thine anger; thou rebukeſt even where thou loveſt; ſo rebuke

mee, that whiles I ſmart with thy rod, I may rejoyce in thy mercy.

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